parameters for regeneration

Work in Progress for King’s Cross Central

The second consultation document prepared by Argent St George, London and Continental Railways and Exel.

December 2001
parameters for regeneration
**Contents**

**Introduction** ........................................................................................................................................ iii

**The Parameters** .................................................................................................................................. 1

1 Land Ownership and Physical Boundaries .................................................. 3
2 The Channel Tunnel Rail Link ................................................................. 7
3 Planning Policy Expectations ................................................................. 11
4 High Density, Mixed Use Development ............................................... 19
5 Strategic Views and Tall Buildings ...................................................... 41
6 Building and Integrating Neighbourhoods ........................................ 45
7 Integrating Communities ....................................................................... 53
8 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Resources .................................. 63
9 Environmental Parameters and Designations ...................................... 69
10 Other Transport Infrastructure ............................................................ 81
11 Site Infrastructure, Services and Utilities ........................................... 101
12 Adjacent Development Projects ........................................................ 107
13 Viability ................................................................................................................. 111

**Source Documents** ...................................................................................................................... 115
List of Figures

1 Site Boundary
2 Other Land Holdings
3 Key Features of CTRL Permanent Works
4 Relocation of Land Use Activities under CTRL
5 Areas Required Temporarily for CTRL Construction Purposes
6 Strategic Opportunity Areas in Central London
7 King's Cross Opportunity Area
8 Camden UDP Designations
9 Density Matrix
10 Broadgate, London
11 Canary Wharf, London
12 Brindleyplace, Birmingham
13 Charter Quay, Kingston upon Thames
14 Paddington, London
15 Potsdamer Platz, Berlin
16 Battery Park City, New York
17 Euralille, Lille
18 Covent Garden, London
19 Manchester Millennium
20 Mayfair, London
21 Plot ratio vs mean building heights
22 Strategic Views
23 Existing Urban Form
24 Ground Floor Land Uses
25 Upper Floor Land Uses
26 Links and Barriers
27 Active and Inactive Frontages
28 Local wards
29 Existing Area Based Partnerships
30 Existing Community Assets
31 Listed Buildings
32 Conservation Areas
33 The Regent's Canal
34 Camley Street Natural Park
35 Potential Ground Contamination
36 Local Views (1994 Planning Brief)
37 Rail Infrastructure
38 Thameslink 2000
39 Underground Network
40 London Underground Works and Hackney-SouthWest
41 Cross River Transit
42 Existing Road Network
43 Road Network Post-CTRL
44 Congestion Charging Zone
45 Existing Bus Services
46 Topography
47 Existing Drainage
48 Other Utilities
49 King's Cross Station
50 P&O Blocks
Introduction

Background

Argent St George, London and Continental Railways (LCR) and Exel plc (Exel) are the developers and landowners taking forward the redevelopment of King's Cross Central (formerly referred to as the King's Cross 'railway lands').

In July 2001, we published our first document about King's Cross, Principles For A Human City. Our aim was - and is - to build a consensus about the principles, a shared set of aspirations for the regeneration of King's Cross, before preparing detailed proposals. Principles For A Human City was an important part of that process. It set out our objective to devise and then deliver, over the next 15 or so years, an exciting and successful mixed use development; one that will shape a dense, vibrant and distinctive urban quarter, bring local benefits and make a lasting contribution to London.

We invited comments on our approach and our suggested principles for a 'human city'. We will test our development ideas against these principles, as they begin to emerge and we invite others to do the same.

The principles are:

» A robust urban framework
» A lasting new place
» Promote accessibility
» A vibrant mix of uses
» Harness the value of heritage
» Work for King's Cross, work for London
» Commit to long-term success
» Engage and inspire
» Secure delivery
» Communicate clearly and openly

The Leader of Camden Council, Councillor Jane Roberts, has welcomed these principles. She provided the foreword to the 'Principles...' document, along with Philip Davies, the London Director of English Heritage.

Parameters

Of course, objectives and principles can only take you so far. That is why we have spent much of the last 18 months researching various 'parameters', to inform our future development proposals. These parameters include:

» Land ownership and physical boundaries
» The Channel Tunnel Rail Link
» Planning policy expectations
» Strategic views of St Paul's Cathedral
» The character of adjoining neighbourhoods
» The needs and priorities of local communities
» Listed buildings and other heritage resources
» Environmental resources and designations
» Existing and proposed transport infrastructure
» Site infrastructure, services and utilities
» Adjacent development projects
» Viability
This document - our second about King's Cross - provides an overview of these parameters. We must address each one, for our proposals to be successful and capable of delivery. For this document, we have concentrated on providing factual and other objective information, with some analysis and interpretation, to explain the relevance or application to King's Cross. We are at a different stage of analysis and understanding with each parameter and this document represents a snapshot of 'work in progress', therefore, as at December 2001.

In some cases, we have been able to include only a summary of the information available about a particular topic. For example, whole books have been written about the historic buildings at King's Cross and it would be inappropriate to include all of that information here. Similarly, we could not hope to include full details of the ecological surveys that have been carried out.

Nor have we tried to cover everything. There will be other issues and topics that influence our proposals (for example waste and air quality management), as we move forward. Our intention, with this document, is to inform people, in a realistic and accessible way, about the principal challenges and opportunities that King's Cross Central presents. In this way, people will be better placed to appraise and debate our proposals as they begin to emerge.

Publication of these 'parameters' is also intended as a positive contribution towards the London Borough of Camden's ongoing review of the existing planning policies and planning brief for the site.

We would welcome comments on this document, particularly if we have got something wrong, or might be ignoring something of crucial importance.

After the Parameters

Our timetable has slipped a little from the 'target planning programme' set out in Appendix C to Principles For A Human City, in part because of our decision to formalise, and make accessible, this work on development parameters.

We hope to publish some development options in the early part of 2002. Thereafter, we intend to hold a series of workshops or seminars, to discuss and debate the options and test them against the principles outlined in July (2001). We will announce the dates, format and locations of these events as soon as possible.

On this basis, and taking into account the need to allow a meaningful period for consultation and to reflect on people's views; and our obligations to prepare Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and other documents, we are working towards the submission of planning applications in the autumn of 2002.
The Parameters

The parameters addressed in this document are as follows:

1 Land Ownership and Physical Boundaries
   a Site Boundary
   b Land Ownership
   c Other Legal Parameters

2 The Channel Tunnel Rail Link
   a Key Features of Permanent Works
   b Relocation of Land Use Activities
   c Land Release

3 Planning Policy Expectations
   a National and Regional Guidance
   b Towards the London Plan
   c Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP)
   d Islington UDP

4 High Density, Mixed Use Development
   a What is High Density?
   b What is Mixed Use?
   c Providing Offices and Other Workplaces
   d Providing Homes and Other Living Accommodation
   e Providing Retail, Leisure, Cultural and Community Uses

5 Strategic Views and Tall Buildings
   a Strategic Views
   b Wider Setting Consultation Areas

6 Building and Integrating Neighbourhoods
   a Urban Form and Grain
   b Land Uses
   c Pedestrian Movement: Links and Barriers
   d Active and Inactive Frontages

7 Integrating Communities
   a Disadvantaged Communities
   b Borough Strategies
   c Area-based Partnerships
   d Education
   e Employment and Training
   f Housing

8 Listed Buildings and Other Heritage Resources
   a Listed Buildings
   b Conservation Areas

9 Environmental Parameters and Designations
   a The Regent's Canal
   b Camley Street Natural Park
   c Notable Species
   d Pre-Industrial Archaeology
   e Potential Ground Contamination
   f Local Views
   g Noise

10 Other Transport Infrastructure
   a Thameslink 2000
   b East Coast Main Line
   c OrbiRail
   d The Underground
   e Hackney-SouthWest
   f Cross River Transit
   g Road Network
   h Providing for Pedestrians, Cyclists, Buses and Taxis
   i Car Parking

11 Site Infrastructure, Services and Utilities
   a Topography and Geology
   b Drainage
   c Other Utilities

12 Adjacent Development Projects
   a Railtrack / King's Cross
   b P&O Blocks

13 Viability
   a Potential Risk and Reward
   b Deliverability
Parameters for Regeneration

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central

Figure 1 - Site Boundary

November 2001
1 Land Ownership and Physical Boundaries

1a Site Boundary

The site boundary for King’s Cross Central is shown in Figure 1. In general, the site is bounded and delineated by:

» the two main line stations of St Pancras and King’s Cross;
» the Midland Main Line and the East Coast Main Line;
» the North London Line;
» York Way; and
» The Regent’s Canal.

King’s Cross Central includes land to both the north and the south of the Regent’s Canal, within the Boroughs of Camden and Islington. The great majority of the site, to the west of York Way, lies within the London Borough of Camden. Part of the site, to the east of York Way, lies within the London Borough of Islington. This area is known as the ‘Islington Triangle’.

Figure 1 shows that part of King’s Cross Central will lie to the north of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, i.e. between the new high speed line, the existing North London Line and the Midland Main Line. As discussed below, much of this area is already earmarked for businesses and land uses that are to be relocated as part of the development of the CTRL.

For the avoidance of doubt, King’s Cross Central does not at present include:

» The Regent’s Canal (see Section 9.a);
» Camley Street Natural Park (see Section 9.b);
» Either of the two railway stations - King’s Cross and St Pancras
» The area in front of King’s Cross station, currently occupied by a ‘temporary’ ticket hall and other station facilities (see Section 12.a);
» A British Gas facility to the north of Battle Bridge road, which has been reconfigured as part of the CTRL works; or
» The Stanley Buildings.

The total site area of King’s Cross Central is 72 acres. This can be broken down as follows:

- Land north of the CTRL .................... 10 acres
- ‘Islington Triangle’ ......................... 2 acres
- Land south of the CTRL & north of the Regent’s Canal ............................................. 43 acres
- Land south of the Regent’s Canal ...... 17 acres

The total of 72 acres includes 8 acres, at the northern end of the site, which have already been earmarked for businesses and land uses affected by the CTRL, as explained further at Section 2.b below. The total also includes 5.5 acres under roads, for example parts of York Way, Goods Way and Pancras Road. The net area for development will be some 58.5 acres.
# Parameters for Regeneration

## Figure 2 - Other Land Holdings

- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Camley Street Natural Park (LB Camden/LWT)
- Gas Governor (British Gas)

### элементы карты:
- North London Line
- East Coast Main Line
- Midland Main Line

### Текст легенды:

- **Boundary of King's Cross Central**
- **Camley Street Natural Park (LB Camden/LWT)**
- **Gas Governor (British Gas)**
- **King's Cross Station (Railtrack)**
- **Regent's canal (British Waterways)**
- **St Pancras Yacht Basin (British Waterways / DTLR)**
- **Stanley Buildings (LB Camden)**
1b Land Ownership

The land within the ‘red line’ in Figure 1 is owned or controlled by LCR and Exel. LCR also control St Pancras station.

Other adjacent landholdings (see Figure 2) are as follows:

» Railtrack own King's Cross Station, the East Coast Main Line, the Midland Main Line and the North London Line;

» British Waterways Board own the Regent's Canal, various locks and basins and the towpath on the northern bank;

» Camley Street Natural Park is owned by the London Borough of Camden and managed/occupied by the London Wildlife Trust;

» British Gas own the gas governor facility to the north of Battle Bridge road;

» The Stanley Buildings are owned by the London Borough of Camden.

The London Borough of Camden own other property to the north, south and west of the King's Cross Central site, including the Cedar Way Industrial Estate between Camley Street and the Midland Main Line.

1c Other Legal Parameters

There are a large number of legal agreements, rights and obligations which affect the King's Cross Central site. Many of these will be removed or otherwise resolved before the land is released for redevelopment.

Other agreements, rights and obligations will continue to exist and these must be taken into account as we develop our proposals. The majority, however, are of the self-evident or common-sense variety. For example, other landowners such as Railtrack and London Underground Ltd enjoy a general right of support and protection to railway works, including bridges, embankments and tunnels. There are also a number of rights and legal restrictions associated with the safe operation and maintenance of the railways, canal and underground infrastructure. The CTRL will have similar requirements once it is operational.

Commentary

We (Argent St George, LCR and Exel) will need to prepare our proposals for King’s Cross Central in the context of land ownership and other legal parameters. For example, we will need to ensure that Railtrack continue to have adequate access to its railway works and that appropriate legal safeguards are accommodated in relation to the new CTRL.

In particular, and as stated in ‘Principles for a Human City’, we recognise that there are currently limited physical links and connections between King’s Cross Central and surrounding areas. It will be essential to address this major challenge as part of our development proposals.

We are therefore discussing, with other adjacent landowners, including the London Borough of Camden, Railtrack and British Waterways Board:

» Their aspirations for the King’s Cross area; and

» How we might work together to further its successful regeneration.
Figure 3 - Key Features of CTRL Permanent Works

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Re-aligned York Way
- CTRL Rail Lines & Embankment
- St Pancras Station Extension
- Thameslink Bored Tunnels
- New Thameslink Station
- Thameslink Cut & Cover Tunnel
- Existing St Pancras Station
- Bridges
- Thameslink in Cut
- New Viaducts

November 2001
2 The Channel Tunnel Rail Link

2a Key Features of Permanent Works

Figure 3 illustrates some key features of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL) permanent works, as authorised by the Channel Tunnel Rail Link Act 1996.

As shown in Figure 3, St Pancras Station will be extended and refurbished as part of the CTRL project, to transform it into London's principal rail interchange for international travellers. The new platform 'deck' will extend over the land to the west of Camley Street and will accommodate full-length Eurostar trains. When the station works are finished, St Pancras Station will have a 'footprint' more than twice the size of the existing building and the main entrance will move to the east side, where the new extension meets the existing St Pancras Station train shed.

The CTRL will run into this international terminus on a new embankment, with bridges over the East Coast Main Line, York Way (which will be lowered and realigned) and the Regent's Canal. The new railway will be some 8 metres higher than the surrounding land as it crosses the northern part of the site, falling to almost ground level by the Regent's Canal.

In addition, there will be new railway viaducts and bridges to provide 'chords' or links between the CTRL and other, existing lines i.e. the East Coast Main Line, the Midland Main Line and the West Coast Main Line.

For example, the existing 'North London Incline' (which connects the East Coast Main Line to the North London Line and thereby the West Coast Main Line) will be moved and realigned. In addition, there will be a direct link to the North London Line from the CTRL.

Figure 3 also indicates the below-ground position of 2 new Thameslink tunnels and a new low-level station 'box', beneath St Pancras Station. These are being constructed as part of the CTRL project.

The new Thameslink tunnels will be bored beneath the King's Cross Central site, to a point west of York Way. Thereafter, the tunnels will be 'cut-and-cover' structures, before surfacing, in open cutting, within the Islington Triangle.

There are also London Underground Limited permanent works (almost wholly below-ground), to construct new northern and western ticket halls, provide additional passenger capacity, enhance the interchange and to generally upgrade the tube station. These works are enabled by the CTRL Act and also incorporate some of the unfulfilled recommendations of the Fennell Report, following the fire at King's Cross/St Pancras Underground Station in 1987. These works are described more fully in Section 10.d (and shown in Figure 40).

2b Relocation of Land Use Activities

As part of the CTRL project, it is necessary to relocate 3 existing facilities, within the northern part of the site, for the railhead delivery of aggregates and cement, to produce concrete. These facilities are operated by Tarmac, Castle Cement (whose facility includes 3 silos for the storage and distribution of cement) and Hanson Pioneer. These companies are all tenants of English Welsh and Scottish Railways (EWS).

The proposed future arrangements for accommodating these railhead, aggregate and cement facilities are shown in Figure 4. The companies will continue to share an existing access road into the site, which will be surfaced, improved and extended. It is intended that part of this access road will become an adopted highway.
Figure 4 - Relocation of Land Use Activities under CTRL

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Aggregate & Cement Transfer Bridge
- Aggregate Hopper
- Access Road
- Camden Transport Depot
- Relocated Castle Cement, Hanson Pioneer & Tarmac Facilities

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New rail sidings, for the reception and discharge of aggregates and cement, will be constructed on the western side of the Midland Main Line. Aggregate and cement will be discharged and transferred over the Midland Main Line in conveyors and pipes, housed within an overhead transfer bridge.

There will also be physical changes to the Camden Transport Depot, which sits in the north east corner of the site, just to the west of York Way (see Figure 4). The realignment of York Way necessitates the removal and demolition of part of the existing depot accommodation and replacement facilities will be constructed, to the west of the existing workshop, which will be retained. Again, these works will be undertaken as part of the CTRL project.

2c Land Release

Figure 5 shows the land within King’s Cross Central which will be required, in the short and medium term, for CTRL construction purposes. In general, this land will not be released for development until late 2006/early 2007, though there is the possibility that some areas (e.g. within the Goods Yard, north of the Regent’s Canal) might be released earlier.

The release of some areas, between the two stations (King’s Cross and St Pancras), is dependent upon the London Underground works described above. These works are programmed for completion by the end of 2006.

Commentary

Our proposals will need to respond to, and accommodate, the sheer scale of the CTRL and related station works. We also need to address the huge numbers of people that will pass through the new international interchange. More than 63 million passengers per annum are expected to pass through the combined King’s Cross-St Pancras interchange by 2022. King’s Cross, as a place, must be attractive to them. It must also be safe, easy to understand and easy to navigate.

We will consider carefully how the CTRL relates to new developments at King’s Cross Central.

The operators of the new high-speed line will have operational requirements. We will be concerned to ensure that new residents, employees and visitors enjoy a high quality urban environment.

Most, but not all of the land to the north of the CTRL is already earmarked for existing aggregate and cement facilities. We need to evaluate the most beneficial use for the land that remains, taking into account the relative compatibility of different land uses. We will also consider whether and how the aggregate and cement facilities influence the wider spatial masterplan.
Figure 5 - Areas Required Temporarily for CTRL Construction Purposes

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Areas of King's Cross Central Required Temporarily for CTRL Construction Purposes
- Temporary haul road to be used by CTRL Construction Traffic

November 2001
3a National and Regional Guidance

National Guidance

National planning policy is set out in a range of documents including Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPGs), planning Circulars and Regional Planning Guidance Notes (RPGs).

There are 25 PPGs covering topics such as general policy and principles (PPG1); housing (PPG3); industrial and commercial development (PPG4); nature conservation (PPG9); planning and waste management (PPG10); transport (PPG13); planning and the historic environment (PPG15); archaeology and planning (PPG16) and planning and noise (PPG24).

A number of these PPGs are referred to throughout this document. PPG13, on the integration of planning and transport, is perhaps particularly relevant. A revised PPG 13 was published recently, in July 2001.

PPG13 seeks the active management of urban growth, to make the fullest use of public transport. It states that major generators of travel demand should be focused in city, town and district centres and near to major public transport interchanges. It identifies development locations which are, or will be, close to major transport interchanges as 'key sites' noting that 'these opportunities may be scarce'.

PPG13 states that local authorities should make the 'maximum use' of these key sites and be 'proactive in promoting intensive development'. In particular, sites which are (or will be) highly accessible by public transport should be allocated for travel intensive uses (including offices, retail and commercial leisure), ensuring the efficient use of land. Local planning authorities should also seek, where possible, a mix of uses, including a residential element.

Where housing is proposed, both PPG13 and PPG3 (Housing) seek to encourage the more efficient use of land, i.e. developments of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare net and (even) greater intensity of development at places with good public transport accessibility.

Current Guidance for London

The current strategic planning guidance for London, RPG3, was published in May 1996. RPG3 identifies King's Cross as one of five 'Central Area Margin Key Opportunities'. In particular, the international transport interchanges of King's Cross, Paddington and Waterloo are identified as major development opportunities. RPG3 states that:

"All should accommodate proposals for a mixture of land uses. The highest densities and most commercial uses should be closest to the termini. They may include large offices, drawing on the high accessibility to regional and international networks, subject to there being a reasonable prospect of demand...Away from the sites of highest accessibility, clear attempts should be made to promote uses which support and regenerate local communities, providing both residential and associated uses and community facilities serving the needs of both new development and established neighbouring areas."
RPG3 identifies the King's Cross railway lands as being of particular metropolitan significance and states that:

"Proposals should be brought forward for a new quarter of London with a distinctive identity, enhancing features of historic and conservation importance. There will be scope for development for business, tourism and leisure, including areas of high density use. It will be appropriate to provide housing and community facilities and measures to enhance access to employment which benefit neighbouring local communities."

3b Towards the London Plan

The Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone, is charged with preparing a spatial development strategy for London and this will replace the current strategic guidance for London, RPG3.

The spatial development strategy will be called 'The London Plan' and a full draft is anticipated in Spring 2002. To date, the Mayor has prepared an initial proposals document called 'Towards the London Plan' (May 2001). This identifies London as the leading city in Europe and one of three leading cities in the world. It also identifies key shortages, including shortages of office space, homes and skilled workers, as challenges which must be tackled - if London is to retain that position.

King's Cross/St Pancras is one of a number of 'mixed use strategic opportunity areas' identified in 'Towards the London Plan' within and around Central London (see Figure 6). The Mayor is keen to facilitate adequate development capacity to enhance the attractiveness of Central London to business, visitors and residents.

Redevelopment of the opportunity areas around the main rail termini, including King's Cross/St Pancras, in tandem with increasing transport capacity, will help provide this additional capacity for development.

The focusing of high density, trip generating development at locations accessible by public transport, such as King's Cross, will be a key principle of the London Plan. 'Towards the London Plan' also refers to the concept of Transport Development Areas (TDAs) and their further development, as a means of achieving higher density, mixed use development.

3c Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

Most of the King's Cross Central site lies within the London Borough of Camden. Camden Council adopted its Unitary Development Plan (UDP) for the Borough in March 2000. It designates the 'King's Cross Railway Lands' as an Opportunity Area, to:

"reflect the exceptional opportunities which this site presents for inner city regeneration".

The boundaries of the Opportunity Area are shown in Figure 7. King's Cross Central makes up the bulk of the Opportunity Area, but the two mainline stations and other areas are also included with the policy designation.

Planning policies for the Opportunity Area are set out in Chapter 13 of the adopted UDP. This states that the Opportunity Area has the potential to create a new quarter for London which enhances features of historic and conservation importance and which provides scope for business development, tourism, leisure, housing, community facilities and measures to enhance local access to employment opportunities.

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1 The Mayor will also publish other strategy documents. The full transport and economic development strategies have already been published, with drafts available on air quality and biodiversity. Other strategies will address culture, energy, noise and waste. Various aspects of the Mayor's Transport Strategy are discussed in Section 10.

2 The Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) has promoted the concept of TDAs. 'Towards the London Plan' refers to TDAs as "well designed, higher density, mixed use areas situated around good public transport access points in urban areas".
The King's Cross Central site is also affected by other UDP designations, as illustrated in Figure 8. Large parts of the site are designated Conservation Area (see Section 8.b.). Other designations include:

» Strategic Views (see Section 5.a.)
» Area of Special Character (Regent's Canal; see Section 9.a.)
» Regent's Canal Open Space (see Section 9.a.);
» Other Public and Private Open Space (e.g. Camley Street Natural Park; see Section 9.b.)
» Green Chain and Corridor (Regent's Canal)
» Metropolitan Walk - Potential Connection

The adopted UDP Proposals Map also identifies that the majority of the site is affected by safeguarding for a number of transport projects, including the Channel Tunnel Rail Link (see Section 2 above); Thameslink 2000 (see Section 10.a); King's Cross Underground Station (see Section 10.d.); and St Pancras CTRL Terminus Highways (see Section 10.g).

Extending beyond the site, parts of the King's Cross and Somers Town wards have been defined as Areas of Community Regeneration, reflecting their status as some of the most disadvantaged parts of the UK (see Section 7). Regeneration of these areas is a priority for the Council.
Figure 7 - King's Cross Opportunity Area

Legend

- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- King's Cross Opportunity Area
- Islington Triangle (Area of Opportunity within Islington)
New UDP Planning Policies for King’s Cross

Chapter 13 of the adopted Camden UDP makes it clear that the Council’s policies for King’s Cross will come up for early review, as soon as there is a confirmed construction timetable for the CTRL Section 2 (the section through East London into London St Pancras). With Section 2 now confirmed and firmly underway, Camden Council have initiated a review of the Chapter 13 policies and consulted local residents about a series of key issues. A new ‘Deposit Draft’ replacement for Chapter 13 of the UDP has now been published, again for consultation.

The Deposit Draft states that the Opportunity Area continues to merit a separate Chapter in recognition of:

- The scale and nature of the outstanding development opportunities presented by the Area’s excellent and improving public transport network;
- The opportunities to bring significant regenerative benefits to surrounding communities and thereby contribute to social inclusion by bringing social, economic and environmental benefits to the Area and beyond;
- The potential contribution of the Area to London’s ‘World City’ status and its economy and cultural diversity;
- The potential for the development of new market, affordable and intermediate housing to contribute to meeting local and London-wide needs;
- The need to address directly the potential impact of comprehensive development on the character, facilities and infrastructure of surrounding areas; and
- The great potential for low energy buildings with sustainable transport links, located in the heart of central London.

Deposit Draft Planning Policy SKC1 seeks the sustainable development of the King’s Cross Opportunity Area, which achieves its full potential to:

- "support and develop London’s role as a world business, commercial and cultural centre;"
- achieve economic, social and physical integration with surrounding communities;
- create employment and training opportunities both generally and for local people;
- contribute positively to meeting the full range of housing needs in Camden and/or London-wide; and
- maximise the use of existing and proposed public transport facilities, and opportunities for walking and cycling, thereby minimising dependence on private car use and traffic generation"

The Deposit Draft indicates that the Council intends to prepare a revised Planning Brief for the site. The current brief was prepared and adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) in 1994.

The commentary to draft policy SKC1 refers to Government and regional advice concerning the desirability of locating higher density development and business uses close to public transport interchanges or termini and states that the approach adopted for the Opportunity Area is consistent with the proposals for Transport Development Areas (TDAs; see above).
Figure 8 - Camden UDP Designations

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Area of Special Character
- Other Public & Private Open Space
- Green Chain & Corridor
- Regent’s Canal Open Space
- Strategic Views
- Strategic Views - Wider Setting Consultation Areas
- Metropolitan Walk Potential Connection

November 2001
3d Islington UDP

Part of the Opportunity Area shown in Figure 7 - the area known as the 'Islington Triangle' to the east of York Way - lies within the London Borough of Islington. The adopted UDP for Islington was prepared in 1994. Islington Council is proposing changes to this UDP and a first set of changes were placed 'on deposit' in June 1999. A second deposit version was published in June 2000.

The revised plan (second deposit version) identifies a number of Special Policy Areas, one of which is King's Cross. The plan states that Islington Council supports the designation of King's Cross, within the Government's strategic guidance, as an area of potential growth and regeneration and sets out the Council's aims of transforming the area into a vibrant and distinctive new quarter for London.

Within Islington, the Plan designates 'King's Cross/ Thornhill/ Pentonville' as an Area of Community Need and explains that the Council will pay special attention to ensure that adverse environmental impacts associated with proposed infrastructure projects and developments are minimised; regeneration monies are used effectively to revitalise the area; and the local community receives a fair share of the benefits which [regeneration] projects and development will generate. For the period of the revised plan, the Council will seek to:

- promote high quality mixed use development which regenerates vacant land and buildings and addresses the needs of the local community;
- enhance the street environment and create a 'walkable neighbourhood' that is safe, easy and pleasant to use by people on foot;
- keep an up to date series of planning briefs for sites identified as Areas of Opportunity;
- develop further partnerships to assist the regeneration of the area into a new urban quarter for London;
- work with Camden Council in providing clarity and guidance for the development of the Railway Lands and to ensure that the north-east part of the site is fully integrated into the future development of the area; and
- ensure that the local community receives appropriate benefits from redevelopment opportunities including affordable homes, jobs, health and community facilities, and environmental improvements.

The plan identifies the Islington Triangle as a proposed Area of Opportunity. A draft planning brief for this site was prepared in September 1996. This encourages a mix of new employment, housing and local shopping/service uses.

Commentary

The broad thrust of national and strategic planning guidance for London is that King's Cross Central should be:

- high density, intensive development;
- allocated for travel intensive uses (for example offices, retail and commercial leisure), to ensure the efficient use of land;
- with a mix of other uses, including a residential element.

Our objectives, as stated in 'Principles for a Human City', reflect and are consistent with, this policy direction. We also share the aspiration, at all planning policy levels, to see regeneration continue to bring benefits to local communities including an accessible, high quality urban environment; local opportunities for jobs, training and housing; and access to high quality healthcare, education and other services.
Figure 9 - Density Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Accessibility Index</th>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>OPTION 1</th>
<th>OPTION 2</th>
<th>OPTION 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sites within Town centre</td>
<td>6 to 4</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>650 - 1100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'Ped Shed' 10 mins walking distance</td>
<td></td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>200 - 450</td>
<td>450 - 700</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>150 - 250</td>
<td>250 - 350</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sites along Transport Corridors &amp; Sites close to a Town Centre 'Ped Shed'</td>
<td>3 to 2</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>200 - 300</td>
<td>300 - 450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>150 - 250</td>
<td>200 - 250</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Density expressed as the number of habitable rooms per hectare.

Definition of Site Setting:
- Central very dense development, large building footprints and buildings of 4 - 6 stories and above e.g. larger town centres and much of Central London
- Urban dense development, with a mix of difference uses and buildings 3-4 stories e.g. town centres, along main arterial routes and substantial parts of Inner London; and
- Suburban lower density development, predominately residential of 2-3 stories e.g. some parts of Inner London, much of Outer London.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Car Parking Provision</th>
<th>OPTION 1</th>
<th>OPTION 2</th>
<th>OPTION 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 - 1.5 spaces per unit</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 - 1 space per unit</td>
<td>Less than 1 space per unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predominant Housing Type</th>
<th>Detached and linked houses</th>
<th>Terraced houses and flats</th>
<th>Mostly flats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OPTION 1</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>2 - 1.5 spaces per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5 - 1 space per unit</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>1.5 - 1 space per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPTION 2</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>1.5 - 1 space per unit</td>
<td>Less than 1 space per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2 - 1.5 spaces per unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OPTION 3</td>
<td>Mostly flats</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 - 1.5 spaces per unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 High Density, Mixed Use Development

4a What is High Density?

There is a planning policy expectation, at all levels, therefore, that King's Cross Central should be high density development. But what does this mean?

We can start by looking at national planning guidance. As explained above, PPG3 on housing suggests that, at places with good public transport accessibility, housing development might achieve densities of 50+ dwellings per hectare\(^1\) (net). The GLA have used a different measure, expressed in terms of the number of habitable rooms per hectare (see Figure 9). The density matrix shown in Figure 9 was included in LPAC's\(^4\) 'Supplementary Advice on Sustainable Residential Quality on Large Sites', in 1999. It has since featured in the GLA's report on London's Housing Capacity (September 2000) and the Mayor's Transport Strategy (July 2001).

King's Cross Central would fall into the 'Central' site setting, with perhaps limited areas defined as 'Urban'. On this basis, residential development ought to achieve densities of up to 1,100 habitable rooms per hectare, depending on the predominant housing type and car parking provision (see Section 10.i.).

These figures mean nothing, however, for commercial developments of offices, other workplaces, leisure and cultural facilities. The density of commercial developments tends to be expressed in terms of a 'plot ratio', calculated as follows:

\[
\text{Plot ratio} = \frac{\text{gross floor area of all buildings}}{\text{site area}}
\]

Thus, a plot ratio of 2.0 would mean that for every square metre of site area, there are 2.0 square metres of development floor space, as measured on a gross external basis\(^5\).

Because this method works for all types of buildings and land uses, including housing, plot ratios are a useful way of comparing mixed use schemes on a consistent, quantitative basis. We have therefore undertaken some research to calculate, as accurately as we can, the plot ratios of different schemes within the UK, Europe and USA. These schemes are:

- **Broadgate, London.**
  Broadgate is primarily an office development, built around Liverpool Street Station in Central London.

- **Canary Wharf, London.**
  Canary Wharf is another office development, this time in London's Docklands. Canary Wharf is served by both the Jubilee Line and the Docklands Light Railway and represents the most significant concentration of tall buildings in the UK.

- **Brindleyplace, Birmingham.**
  Brindleyplace is Argent's best known scheme. Brindleyplace is built around two new public squares and has been cited as an outstanding example of traditionally masterplanned, mixed use regeneration.

- **Charter Quay, Kingston-upon-Thames.**
  This is a current mixed use scheme by St George, between the Market Square and River Thames in Kingston's historic town centre;

- **Paddington, London.**
  The arrival of the Heathrow Express into Paddington Station has proved to be the catalyst for several development schemes. We have looked at the current Paddington Basin development and, immediately to the west, Paddington Central (formerly Paddington Goods Yard).

---

\(^1\) One hectare is an area 100 metres by 100 metres. One hectare = 2.47 acres

\(^4\) The London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC) was formed in 1986 to give strategic planning advice on planning matters to London Boroughs and the Government. Its staff transferred to the Greater London Authority on 1 April 2000.

\(^5\) A gross external measurement takes into account the building envelope and all of the space within it, including hallways, stair wells etc.
Figure 10 - Broadgate, London
Plot Ratio = 4.2

1 - Entrance with steel sculpture by Richard Serra
2 - Broadgate Arena/Ice Rink
3 - Liverpool St Station/Bishopsgate Entrance
4 - Exchange Square

Figure Ground (n.t.s.)
» **Potsdamer Platz, Berlin.**

We have looked at the Daimler Benz mixed use development at Potsdamer Platz, which is one of the most successful redevelopment projects to have been completed in Berlin following German reunification.

» **Battery Park City, New York.**

Battery Park City is another mixed use scheme. It acts as an extension to the lower West Side of Manhattan and comprises office developments with new residential apartments, schools and other services.

» **Euralille, Lille.**

Euralille is a regeneration project centred on the new TGV station at Lille. It encompasses a wide range of land uses. It is not traditionally masterplanned, incorporating instead Rem Koolhaas' 'Architecture of Bigness'.

» **Covent Garden, London.**

Covent Garden is noted for its successful re-use of heritage buildings. It is now one of the most visited and instantly recognisable areas of Central London.

» **Manchester Millennium, Manchester.**

The need to rebuild the centre of Manchester following the IRA bomb in 1996 created an opportunity to re-think and re-design the public realm, improve pedestrian permeability and create new commercial value.

» **Mayfair, London.**

We have looked at part of the Grosvenor Estate in the heart of London’s West End. The Estate was laid out in a series of routes and spaces, including two of London’s largest squares, in the 18th century. The area has, therefore, a robust urban framework; one that has been able to accommodate many new buildings and changes in land uses over time.

'Figure/ground' plans of these development schemes are presented in Figures 10-20. We have calculated their plot ratios as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Site Area (ha)</th>
<th>Gross External Floor Area (m²)</th>
<th>Plot Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadgate</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>359,200</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary Wharf</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>1,626,800</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brindleyplace</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>146,600</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter Quay</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>30,629</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>675,590</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potsdamer Platz</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>357,400</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery Park City</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>1,814,300</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euralille</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>268,500</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covent Garden</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>199,500</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester Millennium</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>279,700</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayfair</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>824,900</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 11 - Canary Wharf, London
Plot Ratio = 4.7

1 - One Canada Square
2 - Cabot Square
3 - The Henry Addington Pub by Heron Quays
As shown, Canary Wharf has the highest plot ratio of the UK case studies. Broadgate, however, is not very far behind. The former is high-rise, high density; the latter medium-rise, high density. In essence, Broadgate achieves its density by covering more of the ground, i.e. it achieves a higher site coverage with buildings, as illustrated in the table above.

The density of Brindleyplace is relatively low, with a plot ratio of 2.1 overall. This figure is an average for the whole scheme, including the residential development at Symphony Court, north of the Canal. This was relatively low-density residential development by today's standards and its exclusion from the calculation would boost Brindleyplace's plot ratio to 2.6.

**4b What is Mixed Use?**

We have taken a similar, analytical approach to considerations of mixed use. Many schemes are referred to as 'mixed use', but what does this mean? And how do schemes differ?

The table overleaf presents a breakdown of the same 11 schemes, detailing the percentage of overall floorspace given over to various land uses: offices; education; residential; hotels; retail; and leisure. Five of the 6 schemes, including the 'mixed use' developments of Brindleyplace, Covent Garden and Potsdamer Platz, are primarily office developments, in terms of their total developed floorspace.

These figures suggest an interesting, if perhaps unsurprising, linkage between density and mix of uses. Generally speaking, high density implies a high proportion of office space, because offices tend to be built more densely than flats or houses. The exception is Battery Park City, which reflects a particular Manhattan model of high(er) density living.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Site Area (ha)</th>
<th>Footprint of Building (ha)</th>
<th>Site Coverage</th>
<th>Mean Number of Storeys</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadgate</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary Wharf</td>
<td>34.8</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>19.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brindleyplace</td>
<td>6.9</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter Quay</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potsdamer Platz</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery Park City</td>
<td>37.0</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euralille</td>
<td>30.5</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covent Garden</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester Millennium</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayfair</td>
<td>33.5</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 12 - Brindleyplace, Birmingham
Plot Ratio = 2.1

Figure Ground (n.t.s.)

1 - Oozells Square, Brindleyplace

2 - Symphony Court, Brindleyplace

3 - Three Brindleyplace
The reverse relationship appears for retailing, i.e. the more a scheme is dominated by retail, the lower the density tends to be. This reflects the fact that shops and restaurants work best at ground level, where they can attract passing trade.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Offices</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Residential</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Retail</th>
<th>Leisure / Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadgate</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canary Wharf</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brindleyplace</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter Quay</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paddington⁶⁶</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potsdamer Platz</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battery Park City</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Euralille</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covent Garden</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manchester Millennium</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayfair</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁶ Paddington Basin includes the redevelopment of St Mary’s Hospital, which accounts for some 12% of the total floor space. This floorspace has been included within the ‘Leisure/Other’ category.
Figure 13 - Charter Quay, Kingston upon Thames
Plot Ratio = 2.2

1 - Riverside Boardwalk

2 - View from the River Thames

3 - Charter Quay Piazza
Commentary

At King’s Cross, the challenge is to achieve densities that are comparable with, or indeed exceed, the Central London benchmark set by Broadgate, certainly in parts of the site. The nature of the site and its transport accessibility dictates that the very highest densities should be pursued.

There are many ways in which high density development can be achieved. Tall buildings are certainly one. Medium height developments can also achieve high density, by making very efficient use of the ground. Developments of tall buildings tend to be less efficient in this respect: developments of tall buildings are generally accompanied by generous streets, squares and other open spaces, resulting in a relatively low ‘site coverage’. This relationship helps explain Figure 21, which graphs plot ratio against mean building height for the 11 development case studies discussed above.

This is not an argument for or against tall buildings. It is simply to explain that high density does not necessarily mean high rise. Whether there is a place for tall buildings at King’s Cross will depend upon many other considerations. For example, we need to consider the conservation of heritage buildings, Conservation Area designations and the protection of strategic views.

In the right locations, however, tall buildings can contribute positively to the quality of the built environment, as discussed further in Section 5 below.

There are, of course, practical limitations to high density. Density should not be pursued at the expense of a high quality urban environment for those that will live, work or otherwise spend their time within our development or the surrounding area.

Similarly, there is a danger in treating mixed-use development as an end in itself (rather than as a means to an end) and assuming that the more ‘mixed’ a scheme is, e.g. within individual blocks and buildings, the better. We support a comprehensive approach to mixed use development - as opposed to the block ‘zoning’ of particular uses to specific areas - but we must avoid the development of a ‘pic’n mix’ approach, whereby different land uses are thrown together and arranged in ever more novel combinations, both horizontally and vertically.

We want to establish a variety of areas and places within King’s Cross Central, each with its own character and sense of place. We want to see areas and places that are lively throughout the day and/or evening, with a varied sense of rhythm. The mix of land uses will therefore vary. As we develop these ideas, we must be conscious that mixed-use development can create a range of conflicts, problems and issues, e.g. noise, odour, traffic, deliveries and parking. These need to be resolved through careful and creative solutions to layout, design, management and long-term stewardship.

Last, our case study examples illustrate that a successful mix does not have to be an evenly balanced mix. Our perception of mixed use is primarily a ground floor experience. Most people would say that Covent Garden is very mixed, perhaps more so than Potsdamer Platz, but the figures suggest that the reverse is true.
Figure 14 - Paddington, London
Plot Ratio = 3.7

Figure Ground (n.t.s.)

1 - Computer Visualisation of
Entrance from Bishopsbridge Road

2 - Computer Visualisation of the Lawn
from Building 2

3 - Computer Visualisation of Waterside
Images by Development Securities plc
4c Providing Offices and Other Workplaces

The GLA’s proposed policy direction, as set out in ‘Towards the London Plan’, is to ensure a steady and appropriate supply of business space, of different types, in response to market needs, including large-scale, high-volume buildings, medium-sized buildings and lower cost flexible space. This will help accommodate projected growth in London’s global economy sectors. Additional capacity is expected to come, in part, from important opportunity areas for new development, near main rail termini.

The Mayor also proposes policies to protect and increase the supply of low-cost premises to support local businesses and rejuvenate local economies.

Specifically in relation to King’s Cross, the London Plan will support the completion of the CTRL and promote the development advantages to be gained from the international stations at Stratford and King’s Cross/St Pancras. ‘Towards the London Plan’ notes that these areas may be particularly suitable for commercial development for companies with close links to Europe.

At a more local level, both the adopted Camden UDP and the new deposit draft Chapter 13 seek a range of employment opportunities within the King’s Cross Opportunity Area.

The deposit draft states that:

”The Opportunity Area should provide accommodation for a range of business uses that contribute to both the London-wide and local economies. Office space for large corporate organisations as well as small business units should be included.”

(Para 13.36)

There is no up to date, site specific guidance on quantum. This may be a feature of the new/revised planning brief for the site. The 1994 planning brief did contain specific guidance on quantum - it stated that office development exceeding 150-180,000 m² would be unlikely to be considered appropriate, because it would lead to ‘over-development’. Of course, this document was prepared before the more recent emphasis on (i) achieving higher densities and (ii) maintaining London’s position as the leading city in Europe and one of the three leading cities in the world. Camden Council intend to prepare a new/replacement planning brief shortly.
Figure 15 - Potsdamer Platz, Berlin
Plot Ratio = 3.4

1 - Office Building on Linkstrasse
2 - Daimler Benz Tower
3 - Retail & Housing on Atte Potsdamer Strasse
Commentary

The London office market is complex. Many potential occupiers, in particular international companies, have a strong desire to be in Central London, because of its transport accessibility, business activity, educational establishments, heritage, the quality of the environment and overall 'sense of place', plus the ready access to shopping, theatre and other entertainment and services. We believe that King's Cross Central represents a significant opportunity to provide for these companies and thus the continued growth of the Central London economy. We support the statement in 'Towards the London Plan' that King’s Cross may be particularly suitable for commercial development for companies with close links to Europe. It may also be ideal for other companies in financial, technology, media and health sectors. King's Cross enjoys strong business links within some of these sectors already.

The majority of major UK and international companies will be seeking to own or lease high quality modern offices. At the same time, we want to accommodate other types of space and tenure more suited to and more accessible to local firms and fledgling enterprises. As we say in our 'Principles…' document, we are keen to facilitate and encourage entrepreneurial activity, to generate buzz and excitement.

We envisage a range of business space, therefore, of different types, with large-scale, high-volume buildings, medium-sized buildings and lower cost flexible space.

In this context, the 1994 SPG figures of 150,000-180,000 square metres of commercial business space (maximum) is clearly out of date and out of step with current planning policy.

150,000-180,000 square metres of commercial business space, alongside 1,000 housing units (see Section 4.d below), would produce a plot ratio over King's Cross Central in the order of only 1.0-1.2. This limited scale of development would undoubtedly represent a wasted opportunity.

150,000-180,000 square metres of commercial business space would also, in our view, fail to deliver a 'cluster' with the requisite critical mass to be successful. RPG3 (see Section 3.a.) acknowledges the importance of achieving a critical mass. 'Towards the London Plan' also highlights the 'critical mass' of Central London for business services and other employment and notes that:

"A number of…sectors have shown a tendency to cluster together in various areas of London, thereby creating a critical mass, which attracts other global companies to London..."

So when does a development establish a cluster with critical mass? It is doubtful whether 103,000 m² of office space at Brindleyplace has established a significant cluster with the requisite critical mass to attract other companies to the region and ensure long-term success. Clearly, Canary Wharf (over 1.5 million m² of office space) is a significant cluster. Broadgate (some 347,000 m² of office space) is probably another, though it also acts as an extension to the City. To the west, Paddington (411,800m² of office space) also looks set to create a new business destination with its own critical mass.
Figure 16 - Battery Park City, New York
Plot Ratio = 4.9

1 - Battery Park City Pavilion
2 - The Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller Park
4d Providing Homes and Other Living Accommodation

‘Towards the London Plan’ identifies the need for additional homes, especially affordable homes, as the single most pressing land use problem in London. The emerging policy approach is to seek new high density housing in places with good public transport accessibility and capacity. King’s Cross is identified as a strategic housing site, with a net capacity of around 1,000 dwellings.\(^7\)

Subject to further assessment, the Mayor proposes to set a target that 50% of new housing should be affordable, including 35% for social renting and 15% for intermediate housing for people on moderate incomes. He also proposes to ensure that new developments provide a range of housing types, to promote social inclusion.

The adopted Camden UDP seeks to ensure that a range of types of housing, including affordable housing, is provided within the King’s Cross Opportunity Area. It sets an indicative target for new residential provision of between 930 and 1,000 units and seeks 25-50% of these to be affordable.

These policy requirements are now being re-evaluated, as part of the general review of Chapter 13 of the UDP. The deposit draft Chapter 13 states that the Council will grant planning permission for development proposals that provide a net increase of at least 1,000 units\(^8\) with 50% of these first 1,000 units being affordable, including both social housing and ‘intermediate’ housing for essential workers and others on moderate incomes.

It also states that, in considering proposals for housing above the initial 1,000 units (net), the Council has a target of 50% affordable housing. The Council proposes to apply this policy, taking into account other planning policies, housing needs and other relevant circumstances (deposit draft Policy KC4).

The deposit draft further states that the early provision of housing should be a priority for each major development phase and that housing should be well integrated with other uses at all major stages of development.

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\(^7\) The GLA report ‘London’s Housing Capacity’ (September 2000) identifies ‘King’s Cross Railway Lands’ as one of 27 sites with capacity for 500 or more net additional dwellings. Annex 4 to the report identifies the net capacity as 951 dwellings.

\(^8\) i.e. 1,000 units in addition to the retention or replacement of 74 units in the Stanley and Culross Buildings
Figure 17 - Euralille, Lille
Plot Ratio = 0.9

Figure Ground (n.t.s.)

1 - Interior of TGV Station

2 - View of Corbusier Bridge & Apartments

3 - View of Tour Crédit Lyonnais
Commentary

We support the identification of King's Cross as a strategic housing site and are examining the feasibility of accommodating a net increase of at least 1,000 new homes. At the same time, we need to take into account heritage, conservation area and other constraints, commercial and viability considerations and the significant policy impetus, documented above, to accommodate employment uses and business growth.

As far as affordable housing is concerned, we acknowledge the need to set aside a significant proportion of new homes as 'affordable', though we have major concerns about the feasibility of achieving 50%. Development densities, the availability of housing support grant, the exact mix of units and other factors will all influence the percentage of affordable housing that can be delivered.

We welcome the recognition given to the 'intermediate' housing requirements of essential workers. As set out in 'Principles for a Human City', we would like to see the needs of essential workers addressed as part of the affordable housing provision. King's Cross Central is a particularly suitable site because of its high accessibility and proximity to local health care and education facilities.

If we are to make the most of this opportunity, to achieve the optimum supply of housing (of all types), in combination with other land uses, we will need to be creative about layout, design, building form and long-term management. The starting point must be the aspiration to achieve high density development. As explained above, the nature of the site and its transport accessibility means that the very highest densities should be pursued.

4e Providing Retail, Leisure, Cultural and Community Uses

Retail provision within the vicinity of King's Cross Central is limited, as discussed further in Section 6.b. below.

At the strategic policy level, 'Towards the London Plan' supports new retail provision within large-scale mixed use developments. It also identifies the role that 'new clusters of cultural and creative industries' can have in assisting regeneration. The London Plan will support the development of new 'cultural quarters' and an improved public realm throughout London, especially in regeneration areas. The Mayor's Cultural Strategy is likely to develop these ideas in more detail.

On hotels, 'Towards the London Plan' states that the Mayor will seek to focus future provision on parts of the Central London fringe and major transport interchanges, to better reflect regeneration and sustainability objectives. New heritage attractions and landmark buildings should provide an important draw for visitors.

Overall, 'Towards the London Plan' identifies benefits in clustering sports, recreation, arts, culture and entertainment facilities in certain locations, including regeneration areas, to encourage the development of supporting services, employment and visitor attractions.
Figure 18 - Covent Garden, London
Plot Ratio = 2.5

1 - Craft Stalls in Covered Market
2 - Floral Street
3 - Sunken Court within Covered Market
The proposed policy directions include the provision of new facilities which support the identity of minority ethnic and faith communities and meet identified needs or deficiencies in provision; and the enhancement of play and leisure facilities for children and provision for young people.

At the local level, the deposit draft Chapter 13 confirms that the mix of uses may include retail, cultural and leisure facilities, bringing benefits to local people as well as tourists and other visitors. There is, it suggests, an opportunity to build on existing strengths such as the vibrant local music and arts sectors (para 13.16).

It suggests that large-scale retail development would be inappropriate, but states that there may be scope for new neighbourhood facilities and also specialist retail outlets to support long distance travellers and tourism (para 13.30).

Camden Council will encourage the provision of leisure and community facilities that are flexible and therefore appropriate for a range of different uses (deposit draft Chapter 13, para 13.31).

**Commentary**

Our view is that appropriate retail uses should be part of a successful, sustainable mixed use development. This could include local retail provision, to support and add diversity for existing and new communities, and leisure-based retailing. The latter is now an integral part of the 'tourism' and 'leisure' sectors highlighted in both RPG3 and the Camden UDP as part of the mixed-use opportunity at King's Cross. At Brindleyplace, shops, restaurants and bars on the ground floors of buildings make a major contribution to the quality of the environment and the sense of place and we have incorporated more of these uses than was first envisaged when planning permission was granted in 1993.

More generally, we will need to think carefully about the right kinds of arts, culture, entertainment, sports, leisure and social provision at King's Cross. We need to think about future local needs; the interaction between land uses; and the interaction between King's Cross and other areas of London.

Though this careful research is necessary, it should not lead to a prescriptive approach about future provision at King's Cross. Things will change over time and it is essential that we are able to respond to these changes, as we progress the development scheme over time.

It will be impossible to predict accurately, today, what local needs or requirements will be in 10 years time, or which land uses will be successful and make the most contribution to the public realm.

Increasingly, we consider that the arts, cultural and entertainment 'offer' at King's Cross should be based on diversity. We do not favour a single, large 'people attractor' which could be something of a large white elephant, with a demanding footprint and major implications for transport, servicing requirements and the layout of adjacent areas. In essence, a single, large people attractor would run counter to the dense, vibrant and distinctive urban quarter that we would like to see.

Instead, the sheer breadth of things to do at King's Cross, and its ability to change and reinvent itself, should be what defines its attraction and make the place successful.
Figure 19 - Manchester Millennium
Plot Ratio = 1.4

1 - Marks & Spencer at Exchange Square
2 - Pub by Exchange Square
3 - Corn & Produce Exchange and Pub opposite Marks & Spencer
Figure 20 - Mayfair, London
Plot Ratio = 2.5

1 - Old Bond Street
2 - Commonwealth Church, North Audley Street
3 - Royal Arcade off Old Bond Street
Figure 21 - Plot Ratio vs Mean Building Heights
5 Strategic Views and Tall Buildings

5a Strategic Views

There are ten Strategic Views within London, each of St Paul's Cathedral and/or the Palace of Westminster. The arrangements for protecting them were established in 1989, by RPG3 (see Section 3.a.). More detailed guidance followed two years later (1991), with the publication of supplementary guidance as an Annex to RPG3 (RPG3A)°.

Two of the ten Strategic Views are relevant to King's Cross:

» Parliament Hill to St Paul's Cathedral
» Kenwood to St Paul's Cathedral

The criteria under which these and other Strategic Views are designated are:

"views of national significance from well-known public places, cherished by both Londoners and visitors, and featuring an exceptional landscape or townscape including visually prominent historic landmarks."

RPG3A aims to safeguard these views of national importance (and their backdrops), which otherwise could 'be obscured by new development'. The guidance is supported by Directions under the Town and Country Planning General Development Order 1988. For each Strategic View, the protected area includes the direct line of sight from the viewpoint to St Paul's and/or the Palace of Westminster, plus a wedge-shaped 'viewing corridor' either side. The width of the viewing corridors increase towards St Paul's and/or the Palace of Westminster, up to a maximum width of 600 metres (i.e. 300 metres either side of the direct line of sight).

These considerations are relevant to King's Cross Central. As shown in Figure 22, two viewing corridors, from Kenwood and Parliament Hill to St Paul's, affect the site. The 1991 planning Directions would apply to any proposed building or structure within these viewing corridors and/or wider setting consultation areas, above a defined 'development plane'. This would effectively impose maximum height restrictions on new development as follows:

» Maximum building heights would be around 50 metres AGL (above ground level), within the viewing corridor from Parliament Hill,
» Maximum building heights would be around 52 metres AGL, within the viewing corridor from Kenwood.

5b Wider Setting Consultation Areas

'Wider setting consultation areas' have been defined for eight of the ten Strategic Views, including the two relevant to King's Cross. These wider setting consultation areas extend some 70 metres either side of the main viewing corridors and are illustrated in Figure 22.
Figure 22 - Strategic Views

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Viewing Corridors of St Paul’s
- Wider Setting Consultation Area

Maximum Building Height
- View from Kenwood = 50m +/- 2m
- View from Parliament Hill = 52m +/- 1m

November 2001
Commentary

As we explain in our 'Principles...' document, we can achieve high-density development and protect the Strategic Views. For example, this could be achieved with buildings of up to 12 storeys, with a traditional urban grain, across the majority of the site.

In areas outside the viewing corridors and wider setting consultation areas, there may be opportunities and advantages to develop some taller, landmark buildings. As we say in the 'Principles...' document:

"We will be exploring these opportunities as part of the masterplanning process. We will consider issues of viability, and whether taller buildings might contribute in a positive way to the quality and legibility of the resulting built environment."

In the right circumstances and locations, tall buildings can make very significant, positive contributions to our towns and cities. In some urban environments, this might mean 10 storeys, in others 20, 25 or more. In other locations, tall buildings will not be so appropriate.

The right response must be judged according to the specific circumstances of the site. We will need to consider the relationship with other buildings, microclimate issues, likely demand, development risk and overall viability.
Figure 23 - Existing Urban Form

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Predominant Directions of Urban Grain
- Buildings

November 2001
6 Building and Integrating Neighbourhoods

6a Urban Form and Grain

Figure 23 shows a 'figure/ground' of the urban areas in and around King's Cross Central, picking out the existing urban structure, its grain and orientation. It is clear that different areas are characterised by different patterns of street layouts, with different relationships between buildings and spaces and this reflects the history of development over time, the influence of land use and land ownership.

The older urban form is largely made up of narrow building plots, with perimeter blocks of human scale development, directly fronting the street. The result is a generally coherent; relatively fine urban grain, regardless of land use, with public and private spaces clearly distinguished and well defined. It can be found to the south of the Euston Road and along major transport arteries such as Caledonian Road and to the north of Agar Grove. Other, small remnants of fine-grain development exist throughout the area, for example at Goldington Crescent.

The major historical exceptions are the functional, transport related buildings such as the mainline railway stations and the Granary. The immediately surrounding urban form dates largely from the twentieth century and its grain is coarser, with fewer connections. There are characteristic groupings of large, single use buildings with inactive frontages. Examples include the British Library, the industrial buildings adjacent to Battlebridge Basin, Elm village and the very many Council (or former Council) housing estates to the north, east and west of the site. The majority of these estates comprise large single, relatively high rise blocks of housing, set in large urban spaces. These spaces are often ill-defined, introspective and rather unconnected; they give the sense of being 'left over'.

As a result, the street pattern and urban hierarchy of these areas are less well defined. A series of 'urban compounds' contribute to an incoherent urban form, discouraging public access and restricting porosity and permeability (see Section 6.c. below).

Figure 23 reveals how the orientation of the urban structure to the east of the site is quite distinct from that to the south/west. King's Cross Central lies at the confluence.

Commentary

In our view, King's Cross Central should respond intelligently to the existing grain of surrounding areas. We make this clear in Principles for a Human City. That does not mean, however, that we should simply 'follow' or copy adjoining areas. Instead, King's Cross Central should establish its own new framework and urban structure, one that integrates with surrounding neighbourhoods and communities and strives to (re)connect them.

Principles for a Human City refers to a 'traditional urban grain'. What we contemplate is a physical framework of major routes, spaces and connections that define intervening 'blocks' of urban development, of a certain, manageable size and scale.

These blocks could be configured in many different ways, i.e. with different spatial arrangements (and orientations) of buildings, land uses, secondary routes and public spaces.

These considerations are vital if we are to knit King's Cross into London and create a successful, lasting new place. It is not simply a question of urban form and grain, however. We need to consider existing links and barriers and their potential impact on our spatial proposals. We also need to think about land uses. Land uses can generate pedestrian and other movements and they are part and parcel of enhancing the public realm. We have undertaken some analysis of both and our emerging findings are reported below.

We used the term 'grain' in our document Principles for a Human City, to refer to the composition of solid and void. It could be explained more formally as the pattern of street blocks, plots and their buildings. If the pattern of blocks and their subdivision into plots is small and frequent, the grain is said to be 'fine'. Conversely, if the pattern is large and infrequent, the grain is said to be 'coarse'.
6b Land Uses

Figure 24 summarises existing ground floor uses. Ground floor uses include residential; food and beverage; other retail; community and leisure facilities; small to medium scale enterprises; light industrial and open space.

Retail uses are clustered together on the Euston Road, Chalton Street, Camden High Street and Caledonian Road. These retail nodes comprise: predominantly local retail and convenience stores; take-away food outlets; newsagents; off-licences and grocery shops. Camden High Street provides higher value retail facilities.

Open space also merits further comment. At present, the Regent's Canal represents the most significant resource (see Section 9.a), both locally and within a wider context - the Canal forms part of a continuous pedestrian/cycle route and green corridor from Little Venice to Limehouse. St Pancras Gardens and Camley Street Natural Park also provide high quality open space. In addition, there are a number of small parks and open spaces distributed within five minutes walk of the site, though they vary in their range of facilities and overall quality.

Camden Council and Islington Council define and record open space in different ways. The Camden UDP maps ‘Other Public and Private Open Space’. Islington Council, on the other hand, classify the nature conservation importance of sites, as either of metropolitan, borough or local importance.

Community Assets are discussed in more detail in Section 7.i.

Typical/predominant upper floor land uses are mapped on Figure 25. The predominant land uses are housing; hotel accommodation; small and medium enterprises; large enterprises and central government organisations.

Hotels tend to be located to the south of Euston Road, close to the transport interchange. Small to Medium Enterprises, including offices, workshops and studios are focused along the Euston Road, Chalton Street, Caledonian Road, within Battlebridge Basin and the Acorn Production Estate.

Commentary

The land use relationships between King's Cross Central and surrounding areas will be important and must help shape our spatial masterplan. Moreover, these relationships will be dynamic. Each will influence the other over time. This may create or point to new regeneration opportunities outside King's Cross Central and we will work with Camden Council and Islington Council to identify these opportunities.

Figure 24 presents an interesting retail analysis. It confirms our view that appropriate retail uses should be part of a successful, sustainable mixed-use development at King's Cross. This could include local retail provision, to support and add diversity for existing and new communities, and leisure-based retailing.

We want to provide a logical sequence of high quality open space. There is the potential to establish green corridors and green chains, appropriate to the urban environment, to complement ‘harder’ civic space. Both should relate well to the canal and the wider network of squares, parks, gardens and other spaces, to enhance the wider public realm. Making the most of this network will also require others to improve and enhance pedestrian, cycle and other links beyond the King's Cross Central site. Again, this is a matter for joint working and co-ordinated efforts.

The Canal is a valuable asset but, locally, it is under-utilised. To make the most of its potential we need to address issues such as the limited access points, narrowness of the towpath and general perception of insecurity (stemming principally from a lack of active, overlooking land uses).
Figure 25 - Typical Upper Floor Land Uses

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Residential - Private
- Residential - Public
- Hotel/Boarding/Guest House
- Bar/Restaurant/Cafe/Nightclub
- Leisure & Recreation
- Public Transport - Railway Stations
- Civic/Community/Cultural
- Large Enterprise/Gov't Organisation
- Small to Medium Enterprise
- Light Industrial
- Vacant/Derelict
- Areas Not Yet Surveyed

November 2001
Pedestrian movement in and around the area is currently hampered by poor legibility and permeability, as illustrated by Figure 26.

First, there are a number of physical boundaries that prevent movement between the site and adjacent areas, including the canal, its boundary walls, the stations and railway. Pedestrian movement is limited to designated access points and crossings.

Second, there are a number of ‘urban compounds’, with a single or dominant land use, that act as physical or perceived barriers, again restricting permeability and reducing legibility.

The main urban compounds are:
- St Pancras Hospital
- Elm Village
- Cedar Way Industrial Estate
- Agar Grove and Maiden Lane Estates
- The Bemerton, Barnsbury and ‘Ten Estates’ within Islington
- The British Library
- Ossulston Estate

Commentary

Peabody Trust, Guinness and Newlon Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) each have plans and aspirations to redevelop their local housing estates. This could create opportunities to form new links and address existing barriers. There may be similar (medium- to long-term) opportunities to redevelop other ‘urban compounds’, for example the Cedar Way Industrial Estate, owned by Camden Council.

Our proposals will take account of any plans and aspirations for new or improved links to Camden Town, Chapel Market and other areas.

In some cases, we will be able to make a direct and positive contribution to their achievement through our development proposals - we can work with the local authorities and other organisations to deliver real connections that people want to use. In other cases, delivery will primarily be a matter for others. Nevertheless, we shall take care to encourage and not prejudice future potential, wherever possible.
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6d  Active and Inactive Frontages

Figure 27 shows active and inactive frontages in the vicinity of the site. The degree of activity is largely a function of land uses (see above). There is a preponderance of active frontages to the south of the Regent's Canal, with the north end of Caledonian Road and Camden Town representing the main foci of active frontages north of the canal.

The inactive frontages are generally blank walls of structures and buildings. There are a series of inactive frontages facing the site boundary including:

» The sides of the mainline stations
» York Way
» The Canal edges and
» The British Library.

Commentary

The upgrading of King's Cross Station (see Section 12.a.) could provide an opportunity to improve the inactive frontages on the east and/or the west sides. Similarly, we hope that the P&O proposals (see Section 12.b) will create a more active street frontage on the east side of York Way, opposite King's Cross Station.

We are keen to create a new active frontage on the west side of York Way as part of King's Cross Central, with new development and new land uses north of the Canal.

However, this must be reconciled with the limitations on building foundations imposed by railway tunnels (see the Commentary for Section 10).

We also recognise the opportunity to bring life and activity to the Regent's Canal, by integrating the canal edge with new development.
Figure 27 - Active & Inactive Frontages

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Active Frontages
- Inactive Frontages

November 2001
7  Integrating Communities

7a Disadvantaged Communities

The area around King's Cross is typical of many inner-city areas with a mix of uses and mix of communities. To the west are the residential areas of Elm Village and Somers Town. The Maiden Lane and Agar Grove Estates lie to the north, with the Hillview Estate and other areas of King's Cross to the south. To the east of the site, within Islington, are the neighbourhoods of Thornhill and the Bemerton, Barnsbury and 'Ten Estates'.

The twelve most local wards (see Figure 28) had a resident population of 83,900 in 1998. These local wards are among the most disadvantaged in the country, with issues of unemployment, low income, poor housing and health and exclusion from opportunities because of a lack of qualifications, ethnic background or caring responsibilities in the home.

Ten of the twelve wards are amongst the 20% most disadvantaged wards in England, when measured against the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Two wards, Somers Town and St Pancras, fall within the 5% most disadvantaged. These assessments reflects a combination of physical, social and economic factors that affect the lives of communities:

» Eight wards in the area are amongst the bottom 10% in England on income indicators;

» The same eight wards are amongst the bottom 10% on employment indicators;

» Three wards in the area fall within the bottom 5% on community health indicators;

» Six wards are amongst the bottom 25% on education indicators;

» Eight wards fall into the bottom 10% on indicators of child poverty.

7b Borough Strategies

Both Camden and Islington Councils are forming Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and these will act as a framework for future regeneration initiatives.

Within Camden, the Borough Council has published a draft Regeneration Strategy (June 2001) and this will form the basis of the LSP Statement for the Borough. The key themes will be:

» Tackling social exclusion

» New initiatives targeted at the interfaces between education, training and employment

» New business support initiatives; and

» Regenerating King's Cross.

Camden Council, together with its strategic partners, has signed up to a Community Strategy, called 'Our Camden, Our Future'. Its vision is one of:

» reduced inequalities in Camden's population

» stronger communities

» a safer place

» a healthier place

» an economically successful place

» an attractive and environmentally friendly place and

» a place with excellent services.

Islington Council's Regeneration Strategy looks forward to a place where all people, communities and enterprise can flourish and be enabled to take advantage of the changing opportunities in a world city.

1 Brunswick, Camden, King's Cross, Somers Town, Bloomsbury, Holborn, Regent's Park, St Pancras (Camden), Holloway, Thornhill, Barnsbury, Clerkenwell (Islington)
Figure 28 - Local Wards

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Local Wards Boundary

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The Council’s vision is:

» for young people, a safe place with access to high quality facilities and services, to help them become employable, ambitious, healthy and self-confident

» for people of working age, a place which provides the opportunity, ability and knowledge to make real choices and where there are real economic opportunities

» for older people, a place which they feel is worth living in and worth contributing to; where people are empowered to shape their lifestyles in good health and without anxiety

» for local communities, a place where people are supported and empowered, and given the tools and confidence to respond to change and opportunities

» for businesses and voluntary organisations, a place which creates an enterprise culture for all and where enterprises recognise their social responsibilities.

7c Area Based Partnerships

Currently, there are several area-based partnership initiatives (Figure 29) including:

» The King’s Cross Partnership

» Camden Central

» West Euston Partnership

» Finsbury New Deal for Communities

In addition, the King’s Cross Partnership helps to support the King’s Cross Community Development Trust. There is a Camden and Islington Health Action Zone (HAZ) and a King’s Cross Education Action Zone (EAZ), aimed at improving school performance. Another education programme, Sure Start, runs in Copenhagen (Islington) and Euston.

7d Education

There are a number of primary schools in the area, but only three secondary schools: South Camden Community School is the only mixed school, with Maria Fidelis (Camden) and Elizabeth Garratt Anderson (Islington) catering for girls only.

Elizabeth Garrett Anderson is the only Islington secondary school that includes King’s Cross within its catchment area. Maria Fidelis is a Catholic school functioning on two sites (Phoenix Road and North Gower Street).

Compared to the Camden average, all schools in King’s Cross have high levels of pupils who:

» are eligible for free school meals

» use English as an additional (secondary) language

» are refugees.

In the past, there have been concerns about school performance. The EAZ designation reflects this and the local concentration of ethnic minority pupils. Educational attainment is now rising fast.

There are a large number of religious based schools in the area and these have tended to perform better than average.
Figure 29 - Existing Area Based Partnerships

Legend

- Red: Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Orange: West Euston SRB
- Pink: King's Cross Partnership Area
- Yellow: New Deal for Communities Finsbury
- Blue: Camden Central SRB
- Orange: Copenhagen Sure Start Schools
- Circle: King's Cross Education Action Zone Schools
- Orange Circle: Copenhagen Sure Start Schools within King's Cross Education Action Zone

Note: Whole area covered by Camden & Islington Health Action Zone

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7e Employment and Training

Current employment within the Brunswick, Camden, Holloway, King's Cross, Somers Town and Thornhill wards is as follows (2000 data):

- banking and finance - 26%
- public administration - 27%
- distribution, retailing and hotels - 14%
- transport and communications - 17%
- manufacturing - 6%
- construction - 3%

Comparison of the April 2001 claimant count with estimates of the economically active population suggests a current local unemployment rate of 11-12%. The King's Cross Partnership has estimated unemployment among ethnic minority groups at 25% (Bangladeshi 34%). A team from University College London (UCL) is currently updating these figures. The London average is around 6%.

The average length of unemployment locally is around 18 months.

Work undertaken by the King's Cross Partnership as part of its Training Strategy identified a number of local employment sectors expected to grow over the next decade. These included: finance and business services; hotel and catering; and creative and cultural industries. Parallel studies have also identified local demand from a number of small business sectors including the not-for-profit/ charitable/ voluntary sector; professional services; communications and media; service retail; light industry and warehousing.

Training statistics are poorly reported, revealing little about the skills attained by participants. The provision of training has been a priority for the King's Cross Partnership and a large number of training opportunities are available to local residents.

A Skills Survey in 1999 identified that 15% of the economically active population were involved in, or about to undergo, training. Twice as many men as women were taking up training places.

The King's Cross Partnership has identified a number of factors which act as barriers to training:

- fees/travel expenses
- lack of local training
- family/childcare responsibilities
- lack of information
- language difficulties
- lack of entry qualifications
- timing difficulties

7f Housing

All of the wards in the immediate vicinity of King's Cross fall within the bottom 5% in England for housing conditions. To a large extent, this reflects conditions within the stock of privately rented accommodation. The condition of public sector housing varies between the very good and the very poor and is changing rapidly. Many of the Islington estates are in the process of renewal following large-scale stock transfers to RSLs, e.g. Guinness (Naish Court); Peabody (Ten Estates) and Newlon (Barnsbury). Few transfers have occurred in Camden though discussions are taking place with residents over the possible transfer of the Ampthill Estate, close to Mornington Crescent, north of Euston Station.

Camden Council are currently undertaking a Borough-wide programme of housing improvement, encompassing many of the estates in the King's Cross area.
Figure 30 - Existing Community Assets
Health Care

Health improvements are one of the priorities of Camden's Community Strategy (see above) and a major focus for Camden Central SRB and other projects. It also ranks high, consistently, on any list of local resident concerns, both generally and in relation to specific changes e.g. CTRL.

Office for National Statistics, GLA and other data (for the years 1988-2000) reveal that:

- Numbers of low birth weight babies are 4% higher in Clerkenwell and Regent's Park wards than the national average;
- Rates of pregnancy amongst under 18yrs are higher than the national average in all wards except Bloomsbury, Brunswick and Thornhill;
- Residents of King's Cross ward are twice as likely to die before the age of 54 than the national average;
- Residents of Brunswick, King's Cross, Somers Town, Holloway and Thornhill wards have a higher than average chance of being killed in an accident;
- Residents of King's Cross ward are 4 times more likely to commit suicide than the national average.

One of the underlying causes of these poor health indicators is that 'hard to reach' groups do not make use of health facilities, for a variety of reasons including language and cultural beliefs. The Health Action Zone is now providing training in health care skills and considering other intervention measures.

The Somers Town medical practice opened in May 2000, funded by South Camden Primary Care Trust. Other recent/current initiatives include the Killick Street Health Centre and a new Binfield health centre (planned for the Bemerton Estate). Both reflect a trend towards the consolidation and collocation of GP and other health services, onto single sites.

Crime

Crime and disorder will occur in any built environment. King's Cross, however, has a particular reputation for drug offences, street prostitution and robbery. These remain the principal recorded crimes in the King's Cross area, though their incidence has fallen in recent years, as a result of concerted and targeted operations by the police, against drug dealers and prostitutes.

'Operation Welwyn' continues to target crime at King's Cross. However, drug use within society generally has continued to rise and the 'local' drugs market has become part of a larger and more mobile market, stretching west to Euston Station and south to Bloomsbury and Soho. Drug use has always been associated with street prostitution and today the Police estimate that 90% of local prostitutes are drug users.

Prostitute activity is centred on King's Cross Station, but it also takes place in other areas along York Way, Goods Way and the Regent's Canal. Evidence of drug taking can be found in the same places.

Burglary - perhaps surprisingly - is less of an issue at King's Cross, but there are burglary 'hot spots' at Maiden Lane and Agar Grove. Camden (Elm) Village is also a target.
7i Community Assets

Figure 30 shows the principal community assets in and around the vicinity of the site. This has been compiled from a combination of site visits and information provided by Camden Council and the King’s Cross Partnership.

Figure 30 reveals that there are a large number of community facilities in the King’s Cross area. Some have a London-wide or national significance, for example the British Library and the Almeida Theatre. Others have a much more 'local' catchment, including many available to only specific sections of the local communities, e.g. certain ethnic minority groups, young/old people, or particular RSL tenants.

A recent audit of community buildings within the Camden Central SRB area concluded that the area is well-served in terms of the number and type of buildings available for community use. However, not all groups have access to these buildings, in particular young people and those with disabilities. In addition, limited resources are holding back outreach and publicity efforts and many buildings are under-resourced and under-utilised.

Reasons for this include:

» Every hall and community building surveyed requires some capital works, including internal and external decoration;
» Many halls have poor disability access and none have facilities for people with hearing or sight problems;
» Many halls suffer from poor signage, awkward access and/or obscured or unidentifiable entrances.

The King’s Cross Partnership supports a Community Buildings project, through which community groups can submit bids to fund capital improvement works.

The bulk of the money available (£1.4m plus match funding) will be spent this year and next year. A number of bids have been approved from the Thornhill Neighbourhood Project, Somers Town Community Association, Jubilee Centre and Coram Fields Sports Project.

7j Sport and Leisure

Sport and leisure facilities within the local area are shown in Figure 30. The Cally Road Pool and the Market Lane tennis centre provide the largest facilities.

The new deposit draft of Chapter 13 states that the Council will encourage the provision of leisure and community facilities that are flexible and therefore appropriate for a range of different users. This will help to keep facilities relevant and ensure their long-term viability. The text goes on to say that teenagers and older citizens are often poorly catered for and it is important to ensure that their needs are addressed.
Commentary

The issues discussed above about deprivation levels, education, employment and training, housing, health care, crime and community assets are inter-related. They require an integrated approach to regeneration.

The King's Cross Central development will play its part and deliver benefits to existing local communities. It will support the growth of local employment sectors; provide new jobs and training opportunities; and deliver new, high quality housing (including a proportion of affordable housing). New retail and leisure facilities could also bring local benefits. In addition, it is important that regeneration delivers access to high quality healthcare, education and other services.

King's Cross Central will also enhance the public realm and improve community safety. Anti-social behaviour, drug use, associated prostitution and street robbery and crime generally are significant local problems. They arise, in part, from the opportunity created by vacant buildings and empty spaces that provide freedom from disturbance. King's Cross Central will minimise these opportunities and thereby reduce both the fear and effects of crime. We have a unique opportunity to design a place where crime and disorder are a rare phenomenon, rather than the norm. We can also help combat the crime threat in surrounding areas, not least by establishing the right physical, economic and social connections and by working with the Metropolitan Police and others to implement the very latest best practice in environmental design.

Many of the existing partnership and other regeneration initiatives, including the King's Cross Partnership, will finish before King's Cross Central developments can start in 2006. We are keen to see new/replacement structures identified and put in place to optimise and disseminate the economic and social benefits for local people and assist in the development's wider integration.

We hope to be an active participant of these new/replacement structures, working with the London Boroughs of Camden and Islington and others (for example the London Development Agency) to:

» address education, employment and training and the interfaces between them;

» address and manage impacts arising from the development (both adverse and beneficial);

» address the better use of community assets;

» engage members of the community and community organisations; and

» promote and deliver successful, long-term management of the urban environment.

We are also very aware of local concerns about health issues. We will be assessing the impact of our proposals - both positive and negative - on health, as part of our Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).
Figure 31 - Listed Buildings

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Listed Buildings (including Curtilage) within Site Boundary
- Listed Buildings beyond Site Boundary

Parameters for Regeneration
8a Listed Buildings

The listed buildings/listed building groups within the King's Cross Central site are:

» The Great Northern Hotel, listed Grade II. Its curved plan reflects the original alignment of Pancras Place, now Pancras Road.

» The German Gymnasium, at 26 Pancras Road, is listed Grade II. It was built in 1864 for the German Gymnastic Society. Its roof of horizontally laminated timber ribs is of the type used to construct the original roof of King's Cross station. Part of the listed building (the entrance way and staircase from Pancras Road) will be removed as part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link works.

» Gasholder No.8, to the south of Goods Way, listed Grade II. This decorated telescopic holder dates from 1883.

» The Granary complex. This includes the Granary building itself, built in 1851 and now listed Grade II. Two 580 foot long sheds flank the Granary and are slightly earlier in date, with two office buildings at the front being later additions. These East and West Transit Sheds, plus the Midland Goods Shed and offices to the east, the Potato Market and intervening roofs are regarded as being within the listed curtilage of the Granary.

» The Eastern Coal Drops. The Eastern Coal Drops were built in 1851. The brick and cast iron structure originally carried four high level railway tracks, from which wagons discharged coal into storage bins above cart-loading bays. Late in the 19th Century the southern end was converted into a warehouse (now night club). The northern end was badly damaged by fire in 1985. The Eastern Coal Drops are listed Grade II.

These listed buildings and structures are shown in Figure 31. Figure 31 also shows the Stanley Buildings. They lie outside the King's Cross Central site but it will be important nevertheless to address their future as part of the development proposals. The buildings date from 1864 and are listed Grade II. These are characteristic of a number of tenement blocks built by the Improved Industrial Dwelling Company to replace slums. One of the three blocks of Stanley Buildings will be demolished as part of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link works.

Figure 31 also indicates the position of a triplet of interlocking gasholders, again listed Grade II, that are currently being dismantled to make way for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The triplet was constructed in the 1880's, over tanks of 1861-4. The structures will be stored within the site, pending a decision on their long-term future.
Figure 32 - Conservation Areas

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Regent's Canal Conservation Area
- King's Cross Conservation Area
- Buildings / Structures Making a Positive Contribution to a Conservation Area
- Conservation Areas within Islington (Regent's Canal West, Keystone Crescent, King's Cross/St Pancras & Barnsbury)

November 2001
Within the wider area, the two railway stations of King's Cross and St Pancras are both listed, Grade I. These buildings lie adjacent to (but not within) the development site of King's Cross Central:

» **St Pancras Station** will be altered and extended to provide the new international railway terminus for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, as described in Section 2 above. The adjacent **St Pancras Chambers**, formerly the Midland Grand Hotel, will be refurbished, restored and brought back into use as a hotel and residential apartments.

» The Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) and Railtrack have objectives to upgrade **King's Cross Station**, to enhance its capacity and allow more services to be run. At the same time, Railtrack aims to relocate the ticket hall and other functions from the 'temporary' structure fronting the Euston Road. The SRA, Railtrack, Department of Transport Local Government and the Regions (DTLR), LCR and Argent St George are now working together to formulate co-ordinated plans for King's Cross Station and the land to the south and west (see Section 12.a).

Also within the immediate vicinity, the **Lock-Keepers Cottage** on the Regent's Canal north of Camley Street Natural Park and the **steam locomotive water point** close to the site of the gas holder triplet, off Goods Way, are listed Grade II. The steam locomotive water point will be relocated away from the line of the CTRL works to St Pancras Lock, where it will replace an existing prefabricated building.

### 8b Conservation Areas

The majority of the site, including the Goods Depot complex north of the Regent's Canal and the whole of the site south of the Canal, falls within the Regent's Canal Conservation Area or the King's Cross Conservation Area. The boundaries of these conservation areas, within the vicinity of King's Cross Central, are shown in Figure 32.

#### Regent's Canal Conservation Area

The Regent's Canal Conservation Area Statement (Camden Council, 1991) has the status of Supplementary Planning Guidance and gives detailed guidance in support of UDP policies. The Statement describes the special character of the area as "largely derived from the almost hidden nature of the canal". It defines 3 principal sub-areas, one of which is at King's Cross, between the Midland Main Line railway and York Way:

"This part of the Conservation Area is the closest to, yet most isolated from, the city, located behind the St Pancras and King's Cross Stations"

The Statement describes how the collection of Goods Yard buildings to the north of the canal are separated from it by a high retaining wall, such that the historic buildings and spaces are glimpsed only in part from the canal. These buildings and spaces have survived well and the Statement refers to the 'totality of this historic grain' as contributing in large part to the character of the Conservation Area:

"The structures and surfaces on site are of interest in themselves but it is the experience of them as a group that is the essence of the character of the Conservation Area."
"The resultant site layout has created a defined space in front of the Granary enclosed by the Eastern Coal Drops and the Fish and Coal Offices akin to a city square...The complexity of this space is added to by the ramps which access the lower yard areas below the eastern coal drops and by the elevated sections of railway on the edge of the space. This adds a sculptural quality to the urban space between the existing buildings on the site and forms a very important part of the character of the Goods Yard."

Overall, the Statement sets out the Council’s aim to conserve and enhance the existing character of the canal and to improve its potential for recreation, transportation and wildlife. In that context, the Statement identifies some 'negative features', including the petrol filling station west of the Maiden Lane (York Way) bridge; the absence of a publicly accessible link across the canal into the Goods Yard; and the detailing of the access point from York Way.

Under ‘current issues’, the Statement advises that the design of new buildings should positively address the canal side, whilst striking a balance with its established historic character. The Goods Yard buildings are identified as having 'tremendous potential' for reuse within their existing envelopes.

Safety is also highlighted, as an issue that can be addressed through the development process.

King’s Cross Conservation Area

The King’s Cross Conservation Area Statement (Camden Council, 1998) describes the character and appearance of the King’s Cross and St Pancras, Regent’s Canal and Keystone Crescent (Islington) Conservation Areas. These areas:

"contain an important assembly of early and mid-nineteenth century canal, railway, industrial, commercial and residential buildings around the King’s Cross and St Pancras Stations."

Apart from the existing railway uses, the area is characterised by:

"its variety of business and residential uses, its variety of building types and potential for regeneration. Part of the special character is also the historic robust streetscapes including areas of granite setts, York stone paving and distinctive bollards.

Quite apart from the special interest of the buildings, this phase of London’s history is recognised as the first major change to London since its rebuilding after the Great Fire of London. Nowhere else in London provides such a coherent illustration of what happened when the railways arrived and the full range of development they engendered."

Under ‘guidelines’, the Statement advises that new development proposals should be guided by the UDP. They should be seen as an opportunity to enhance the Conservation Area and should respect the built form and historic context of the area. The Statement also refers to the 1994 Planning Brief. As explained above, both the UDP policies and planning brief are currently under review.
Buildings and Structures

The Regent's Canal and King's Cross Conservation Area Statements and an English Heritage Position Statement (1997) on 'King's Cross Railway Lands' identify a number of unlisted buildings or structures as making a positive contribution to the character and appearance of these conservation areas:

» The Western Coal Drops and adjoining Western Goodshed. The Western Coal Drops were built in 1859-60 and converted to a general goods transit shed when the Western Goodshed was built alongside in 1897-99, on the site of an earlier coal and stone handling basin (see Section 9.a.).

» The Plimsoll Viaduct

» Perimeter wall and roadway over stables (Wharf Road)

» The Coal and Fish Offices. These face the Granary and were constructed in phases dating from 1852

» Regeneration House

» Maiden Lane Bridge (York Way bridge over the Regent's Canal)

» The Culross Buildings

» The Weller's Court warehouse (this building has now been removed as part of the CTRL works)

These buildings and structures are identified on Figure 32.

North of the Canal, English Heritage regard the Western Coal Drop, adjoining Western Goodshed, Coal and Fish Offices and Regeneration House as having important group value in the Goods Depot complex.12

South of the Canal, English Heritage regard the Culross Buildings as significant ancillaries to major monuments which make a vital contribution to the Victorian townscape, an important part of the character of the area.13

Other historic features include items of street furniture, granite and sandstone setts and kerbs and minor industrial and other features.

These include bollards, parish markers and gas-lamp brackets.

The 1998 English Heritage report 'King's Cross Development Site, An Inventory of Architectural and Industrial Features' provides more information about the historic buildings, structures and features at King's Cross.

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12 King's Cross Railway Lands: English Heritage Position Statement, March 1997
13 King's Cross Railway Lands: English Heritage Position Statement, March 1997
**Commentary**

Our document 'Principles for A Human City' explains that:

» Our spatial masterplan will reflect, and benefit from, a proper assessment of the historic buildings, structures, surfaces and wider conservation areas;

» Many historic buildings, structures and surfaces are capable of being re-used in exciting new ways that will generate new life; others, however, may not have the same potential. There may be strong, valid reasons why we should consider their removal. In these circumstances, we must balance the need to conserve the historic environment with the economic, social, and environmental benefits of development and regeneration;

» Good new design can both complement and enhance the historic environment and create a rich historic environment for the future.

We are still conducting the 'proper assessment' referred to in the 'Principles…' document and, accordingly, we have not formed any definitive views about the future of individual buildings or structures. Our starting point, however, is that the heritage environment affords us a tremendous advantage and opportunity, in terms of establishing a cultural identity and sense of place.

We will therefore want to retain and accommodate heritage buildings that can enhance the public realm of the new city quarter, irrespective of any planning and legal considerations. Of course, this may itself mean some redevelopment and intervention, to provide for viable new use. It should also mean embedding heritage buildings within the fabric of the city, to bring vitality and new life and secure their long-term future. We do not favour the artificial creation of a 'heritage park', disconnected from the rest of the city.

The site includes two major groups of 'frontal' heritage buildings - the stations in the south and the Goods Yard buildings in the north - and these afford the opportunity to define two of the new civic spaces for King's Cross, linked together by public routes. We want to develop a robust urban framework of connections, routes and civic spaces, to bring people into this previously 'private' transportation site - this could be the starting point.

As far as the dismantled gas holders are concerned, we need to understand whether, and how, the triplet could be put to some new, economically viable use. We are undertaking research into this, in consultation with English Heritage and others.
9 Environmental Parameters and Designations

9a The Regent's Canal

The Regent's Canal does not form part of the King's Cross Central site, but it is an important environmental and recreational asset. The Canal links the Grand Union Canal at Little Venice to the Limehouse Cut and Limehouse Basin. The section through King's Cross is shown in Figure 33. The Canal Bill was given royal assent in 1812 and work began in October 1812. By mid 1815 the canal was largely finished. However, work on the section between Maiden Lane Bridge (York Way) and Hampstead Road Locks (Camden High Street) did not begin until mid 1818. The bridges at Maiden Lane and Caledonian Road were completed in 1818. St Pancras Lock was built in 1819. The canal was finally finished in 1820.

In the past, the canal provided access to three substantial basins (see Figure 33), none of which survive today:

- a coal and stone basin, filled in during the 19th century with the Western Coal Drops and adjacent Goods Shed built on top (see Figure 23);
- the Granary basin has long been filled, but its size and shape are still evident today and it has not been covered by any significant buildings; and
- a gasworks basin to the south of the canal. This was demolished and filled in to enable the construction of additional railway tracks into King's Cross Station.

The Regent's Canal Conservation Area Statement (see section 8.b.) states that the canal is an important feature of historic and visual interest in the townscape and that, following the decline of traditional canal-related commercial activities, it is increasingly recognised as a valuable resource for water-based leisure activities; for its ecological value and its potential for transportation and informal recreation.

Camden Council aim to conserve and enhance the existing character of the canal and to improve its potential for recreation, transportation and wildlife.

As explained above, the canal has been designated as a Conservation Area (see section 8.b.). It is also designated, within the adopted UDP as:

- an Area of Special Character;
- Public Open Space; and
- A Green Chain.

Policies for the Regent's Canal Area of Special Character are set out in Chapter 15 of the UDP. Policies RC1-RC12 address matters such as visual character; scale; views and skyline; traditional uses and buildings; historic features and structures; recreation; access; green chains; information and facilities; waterspace; moorings and transport.

Policy RC2 states that the height of new buildings should reflect that of existing canalside buildings or, as a general rule, the height of buildings which frame the Canal should not exceed four domestic storeys on either side of the Canal as taken from towpath level. Policy RC4 seeks a mix of uses, which complement the character, and function of the Canal. The explanatory text refers to recreational uses, housing and employment-generating uses.

The canal is further designated as a non-statutory Site of Metropolitan Importance (SMI) for nature conservation. The SMI incorporates both the open water of the canal and the adjacent habitat of the towpath.

A number of nature conservation surveys carried out as part of the CTRL project provide ecological information relating to the canal and the Environment Agency has provided information on water quality and aquatic invertebrate populations.
Figure 33 - The Regent's Canal

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Former Basins (now infilled)
- The Regent's Canal

November 2001
The mixture of habitats is uncommon in London and supports a variety of species in an otherwise inhospitable environment. There is a restricted invertebrate community of low diversity and a fishery comprising bream, roach, tench, carp, pike and perch.

Argent St George has also commissioned its own surveys of fauna and flora. See Section 9.c. below.

The canal is an important nature conservation resource in an area where wildlife habitat is scarce.

It acts as a wildlife corridor linking central London with habitats to the west. Breeding birds associated with the canal at the site included Canada goose, mallard, moorhen and coot. The only bat species recorded in our surveys was common pipistrelle, which was recorded feeding along the canal and in the vicinity of Camley Street Natural Park (see section 9.b below).

The canal is also of significance in providing opportunities for informal recreation, which includes appreciation of its wildlife.

Commentary

The Regent's Canal is owned and managed by British Waterways. Our proposals will retain and respect the canal, its built form, scale and historic context. We aim to capitalise upon the canal's positive contribution to King's Cross. Equally, we see redevelopment as an opportunity to enhance the canal, its character and appearance, access, safety, wildlife value and recreational use.

For example, the absence of a publicly accessible link across the canal into the Goods Yard site contributes to its isolation and this is a negative feature identified in the Conservation Area Statement. Redevelopment might address this, by refurbishing or replacing (on the same or different alignment) an existing road bridge over the canal, owned by Exel and forming part of King's Cross Central. This bridge connects Goods Way to Wharf Road but is fenced off at present, for vehicular traffic.

There may also be other opportunities to provide new publicly accessible links and access. We will discuss these with British Waterways.

Improved links and access to the canal side could also improve the perceived sense of security for those using the canal. Currently, certain sections of the land have an intimidating character.

The 1994 planning brief advocated the reopening of the former canal basins within the site and this was a feature of previous development proposals for the railway lands. Re-opening any basin would be a significant and expensive undertaking. Nevertheless, we are currently exploring the potential benefits and disbenefits, as part of our masterplanning process.
Figure 34 - Camley Street Natural Park

Parameters for Regeneration

November 2001
9b Camley Street Natural Park

As explained in Section 1, Camley Street Natural Park is not part of the King's Cross Central site: it sits alongside. Its origins lie in 1981, when the Greater London Council bought the land from British Rail. The site was cleared over the winter of 1983-84 and trees and shrubs planted in spring of 1984. Ken Livingstone officially opened the park in 1985. Following abolition of the GLC, ownership of the park was transferred to the London Borough of Camden who lease it to the London Wildlife Trust. The park is a statutory Local Nature Reserve, and is designated as a non-statutory Site of Metropolitan Importance for nature conservation.

A plan of the natural park is shown at Figure 34. The park encompasses a variety of habitats, with wet and dry woodland, grassland, fen vegetation and ponds. There is a nature trail and a visitor centre that provides interpretation, educational and other facilities. The park is an important educational resource, used by local primary and secondary schools and other educational establishments. It is also open to, and used by, the general public. The London Wildlife Trust hope to develop these roles and it has proposals to develop an improved visitor centre, with more facilities.

Surveys carried out as part of the CTRL project provide ecological information about the natural park. We have commissioned further surveys as reported in Section 9.c. below. The natural park is botanically rich, compared with surrounding areas, and contains a variety of habitats and diversity of species. Of 22 breeding bird species recorded in and around the Kings Cross Central site, at the time of our surveys, 10 bred within the natural park. Smooth newts, frogs and toads were also recorded. In addition, pipistrelle bats were recorded foraging at the natural park.

Commentary

Our 'Principles..' document makes it clear that Camley Street Natural Park should be retained and protected. Beyond that, we are keen to consider the future role of the Park, with Camden Council and the London Wildlife Trust. The Park could potentially play a very positive role alongside the new development, providing a valuable resource for adults and children alike, living, working and going to school within the surrounding area.
9c  Notable Species

A wide range of species are afforded protection under UK and EC legislation. Other species, whilst not legally protected, are identified as key species under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (which is the UK’s response to its responsibilities under the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity). The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 gives statutory status to the Action Plan. Other species may be notable or important because they are rare, scarce, or declining, nationally or locally.

Argent St George has commissioned surveys of habitats, breeding birds, reptiles and amphibians, terrestrial invertebrates, aquatic invertebrates and bats. The survey area included the King's Cross Central site plus some adjacent areas, for example Camley Street Natural Park (see Section 9.b. above). We have also reviewed information provided by English Nature, the London Wildlife Trust and by the CTRL project. This research has identified a number of notable species in and around the King’s Cross Central site, including black redstarts, pipistrelle bats and smooth newts.

9d  Pre-Industrial Archaeology

The St Pancras Church Yard and an area to the west of Camley Street Natural Park, to be used for construction of the new CTRL and St Pancras international station, is designated as an Archaeological Priority Area in the adopted Camden UDP.

The designated Archaeological Priority Area does not cover King's Cross Central. Nevertheless, the 1994 Planning Brief stated that:

"There is good reason to believe that there may be remains of archaeological importance on this site. In accordance with Government advice, the Council invites submission of an archaeological evaluation report before determining any detailed application for planning or listed building consent...A representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains are potentially at risk should be studied, and attention should be given to sites and remains of all archaeological periods."

Site evaluations carried out as part of the CTRL works have addressed archaeological concerns and revealed little in terms of old fill and artefact discoveries.
The site has a long history of urban developments including canals, railways, goods yards, marshalling yards, gasworks, coal depots and an ammunition factory. Like many brownfield sites, therefore, parts of King's Cross Central are contaminated. The evidence from previous site investigations is that, in general, the levels of contamination are low and consistent with the previous uses of the site.

There are some locations, however, where contamination levels may be higher. These locations are shown in Figure 35, which reflects the findings of various previous desk-top studies and site investigations, many undertaken for CTRL:

» the former Gasworks site. Typical contaminants associated with Gasworks are tars, polyaromatic hydrocarbons, oils, phenols, cyanides, sulphur compounds, coal and coke residues. Some of these contaminants (phenols and oils) are relatively mobile.

» a former Diesel Depot (the Cambridge Street Diesel Depot). The main contamination associated with the former diesel depot will be oils. Some remediation of the Depot site will be undertaken as part of the CTRL works.

» a former locomotive refuelling area. Again, the main contamination will be oils.

» railway lands in the north of the site. Potential contaminants are oils and tars, coal and ash, phenols, polyaromatic hydrocarbons, sulphates, metals, antifreeze and possibly asbestos from insulation, lagging and brake linings of locomotives.

» the ammunition factory, where rifle cartridges were made using a variety of chemicals. It is some 125 years since the factory closed, but the site may still retain a residue of contamination.

» infilled basins (see Section 9.a.). The nature of the fill is unknown at present and there is a possibility that waste material from the gasworks or ash/coal were used.

The Exel plc Goods Yard site, north of the Regent’s Canal, has not been subject to any site investigations. As with other areas, we would expect to find at least some low level ground contamination.

There is some potential for unexploded bombs from the Second World War. The CTRL project has careful and thorough procedures for investigating this potential along the CTRL route. Similar procedures may be appropriate at King’s Cross Central.

**Commentary**

Contamination levels on the King’s Cross Central site will not preclude or significantly constrain redevelopment. We shall, however, have to implement a remediation strategy, as part of our development proposals. This remediation strategy will reflect the findings of our EIA and our discussions with Camden and Islington Councils and the Environment Agency.
Figure 35 - Potential Ground Contamination

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Former Diesel Depot
- Former Ammunition Factory
- Former Locomotive Refuelling Area
- Railway Lands containing Black Ash Sand Layer
- Former Gas Works
- Area Not Subject to Site Investigations

Parameters for Regeneration

November 2001
**9f Local Views**

The 1994 planning brief identified a number of 'local views' that should be considered and taken into account as part of any redevelopment proposals.

First, the planning brief identified a 'middle distance view' from Primrose Hill towards the King's Cross site. The brief refers to this as:

"a more local strategic view, which should be safeguarded from intrusive development. Development should make a positive contribution to the skyline when viewed from Primrose Hill."

The planning brief also identified:

- 13 local views towards the site
- 12 local views within the site

which should be taken into account during the design, to avoid intrusive development. These local viewpoints are identified in Figure 36.

The 1994 brief identified views from the area adjacent to the Coal and Fish Offices to the 'country' end of King's Cross station; and from the Goods Yard complex and above St Pancras lock to the spires and station at St Pancras as being 'particularly important'.

**Commentary**

We agree that local views are relevant and should be taken into account. That said, we believe that the list of local views identified in the 1994 planning brief should be reviewed. In many cases, the particular feature or element which gives rise to the view has changed, been removed or relocated. In other cases, the view will change substantially as a result of the CTRL works. In addition, we believe that we should make a distinction between public views and 'private' views, i.e. from views from locations not accessible to the general public.

We also believe that it is important not to lose sight of the "bigger picture". King's Cross Central affords an opportunity to create an exciting and successful mixed use development: one that will shape a dense, vibrant and distinctive urban quarter; bring local regeneration benefits, including the enhancement of the townscape and public realm overall; and make a lasting contribution to London. It is inevitable, therefore, that redevelopment will change the local views identified in the 1994 planning brief. It will also create new views.

The impact of our proposals on important local views - positive and/or negative - will be addressed as part of our EIA.
9g Noise

The King’s Cross Central site will be bounded by several road and rail noise sources, including the high speed CTRL. These noise sources could have an influence on our development proposals, in particular the location, layout and design of new homes and other living accommodation.

National planning policy on noise and its impact on new development is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 24 (PPG24) on Planning and Noise. PPG24 defines various Noise Exposure Categories (NECs) for development sites, with reference to external (free field) day-time (07:00-23:00 hours) and night-time (23:00-07:00 hours) noise levels.

Where ambient noise levels are particularly high (NECs ‘C’ and ‘D’), PPG24 advises that planning permission for new residential development should normally be refused.

For most sites, however (those falling into NECs ‘A’ and ‘B’), PPG24 confirms that planning permission should not be refused because of noise, though protective measures may be required in some areas to reduce levels to acceptable levels.

Within Camden, the Council has adopted its own noise policies, as part of the UDP. Camden Council have adopted a different approach from PPG24 and specified maximum external noise levels for three periods: a shortened day-time period (07:00-19:00); an evening period (19:00-23:00) and night-time (23:00-07:00). Where noise levels exceed the maximum levels specified, the UDP states that planning permission should normally be refused for development involving residential units (Chapter 16, Development Standards).

Commentary

Preliminary assessment of future ambient noise levels indicates that there are unlikely to be any parts of the King’s Cross Central site where planning permission would be refused for residential development, because of noise. However, mitigation measures may be required in parts of the site to reduce the internal impact of external noise. Potential mitigation techniques include:

- setting the buildings back from the highway or railway;
- noise barriers, including the use of walls, fences and landscaping;
- acoustic glazing and acoustic ventilation;
- the location and orientation of non-habitable corridors and blocks;
- orientating sensitive (habitable) rooms away from noise sources;
- the incorporation of anti-vibration features to isolate the foundations of buildings from the structures above, to prevent structure-borne noise.

The possible requirement for, and application of, these mitigation techniques will be addressed in more detail as part of our EIA.
Figure 37 - Rail Infrastructure

Legend

- Boundary of King's Cross Central

Parameters for Regeneration
10a Thameslink 2000

The Mayor's Transport Strategy identifies a structural imbalance between the transport capacity of the central area of London and the services feeding it. This imbalance is stated to reflect the historic development of London's rail and Underground networks, in particular the termination of major railway lines on the outskirts of the central area, such that Euston, St Pancras and King's Cross (for example) are all located along the Euston Rd.

One way of addressing the resultant problems of terminal capacity and of onward distribution is to extend rail services, via tunnels, through the central area, avoiding the need to interchange. The aim is to provide a more efficient rail system with increased capacity within the central area and along the major corridors serving it. There are a number of schemes proposed to bring people directly into the central area, avoiding the need to interchange whilst offering significant time savings and improving transport links at the same time. One of these schemes is Thameslink 2000.

Thameslink 2000 will, subject to the completion of statutory consultation and approval procedures (a public inquiry closed on the 16th May 2001), build on the existing cross-London link between Farringdon and Blackfriars. Within the King's Cross area, existing Thameslink services run beneath the Midland Main Line, in tunnel, to a Thameslink station at Pentonville Road, 300 metres to the east of King's Cross station (see Figure 37). From here, there are services north to Luton (with bus links to the airport) and Bedford and south to Gatwick Airport and Brighton.

The Thameslink 2000 project aims to extend and enhance these existing Thameslink services significantly with:

» More trains. Railtrack proposes to increase the number of trains from a maximum of eight trains per hour currently, to a maximum of 24 trains per hour in the peak and 18 trains per hour off-peak;

» Longer trains, to ease congestion. Railtrack wish to cater for 12 carriage trains instead of 8 carriage trains at present. This would make a significant difference to passenger carrying capacity;

» More destinations. The current network of services includes 51 stations. Under the Thameslink 2000 proposals, this would increase to 169 stations across 8 counties, 15 London Boroughs and 3 other unitary authorities. Trains would operate between Bedford, Peterborough and King's Lynn in the north, and Guildford, Horsham, East Grinstead, Littlehampton, Brighton, Eastbourne, Ashford and Dartford in the south, all via central London. Figure 38 shows the existing Thameslink network in blue with the proposed additions in green.

» More through trains. This would reduce the need for interchange in London and thereby ease some of the pressure on the Underground system and improve journey times.

» Connections to European services, in particular the CTRL. At King's Cross, this means the construction of two new Thameslink tunnels across and beneath the King's Cross Central site, with a new low-level Thameslink station at Midland Road, beneath St Pancras Station. As explained in Section 2, these works are being undertaken as part of the CTRL.
Figure 38 - Thameslink 2000
Other elements of the Thameslink 2000 project (including the 'fitting out' of the new low-level station and tunnels into St Pancras) will depend upon gaining statutory approval. The Mayor’s Transport Strategy states that, subject to this approval, Thameslink 2000 should be completed by 2008, with funding provided by the Strategic Rail Authority (SRA) and commercial rail operators.

As and when the new St Pancras (Midland Road) low-level Thameslink station is available, the existing station on Pentonville road will close. All Thameslink services will then operate from the new low-level station. In addition, it has been assumed that existing suburban train services, currently operating out of King’s Cross Station (see Section 10.b below), will transfer to the new low-level Thameslink station at St Pancras/Midland Road.

10b East Coast Main Line

The East Coast Main Line provides links between King’s Cross Station, the East of England, North Eastern England and Scotland. It carries Britain’s fastest passenger train service, alongside bulk freight and mail trains.

The East Coast Main Line is operating at full capacity during peak hours. Railtrack have a major programme of upgrade and enhancement and this is taking place in four phases, covering the whole of the line between King’s Cross and Edinburgh. The line upgrade and enhancement work is scheduled for completion in 2010.

Within the immediate vicinity of King’s Cross Central, the East Coast Main Line approaches King’s Cross Station from the north and runs underneath the Regent’s Canal, through the ‘Gasworks Tunnel’ (see Figure 37). There are three existing surface vent shafts for the Gasworks Tunnel to the west of York Way and these must be retained and accommodated.

There is no indication, currently, that the East Coast Main Line enhancement will entail any major construction work at King’s Cross. However, Railtrack and the SRA do have aspirations for additional platform capacity and other improvements. These aspirations are discussed further in Section 12.a.

10c OrbiRail

Inner London already has limited orbital rail services, such as those on the North London Line, which forms the northern boundary of the King’s Cross Central site (see Figure 37). The Mayor’s Transport Strategy promotes the improvement of these orbital rail links, to form a wider London orbital network, OrbiRail.

OrbiRail would be achieved by building on the core of existing services. The first stage of the project would be to extend the East London Line to Dalston, where it could connect with the existing North London Line, allowing services to run to and from destinations such as Highbury and Islington, Finsbury Park and Willesden Junction.

Transport for London¹⁴ (TfL) is working with the SRA and London Underground to secure early progress on the construction of infrastructure necessary for the East London Line Extension. The SRA will fund the core scheme with TfL providing resources to integrate the scheme with other public transport services. The provisional phasing shown in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy indicates construction starting in 2002, with a projected opening date of 2006.

Within the immediate vicinity of King’s Cross Central, TfL is considering the viability of establishing a new station on the North London Line, close to York Way.

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¹⁴ TfL is one of the functional bodies of the Greater London Authority
Figure 39 - Underground Network

November 2001
10d The Underground

As shown in Figure 39, King's Cross is already served by 6 Underground lines: the deep level Northern, Piccadilly and Victoria lines and the sub-surface Circle, Metropolitan and Hammersmith and City. King's Cross is the third busiest station on the underground network, used by some 70 million passengers per year.

Some 55,000 passengers currently use the station in the morning peak and the Mayor's Transport Strategy shows the majority of the City branch of the Northern line, together with the Piccadilly and Victoria lines through King's Cross as being 'very crowded'. Congestion is exacerbated by current escalator refurbishment work, with no entry to the Northern line during the am and pm peaks and reduced access to the Piccadilly and Victoria lines.

London Underground have now commenced works to improve and enhance King's Cross station, partly as a consequence of the CTRL but also to implement the Fennell Report recommendations following the King's Cross fire. The extent of these works is shown in Figure 40. Works to extend and refurbish the existing Tube ticket hall and construct a new Western ticket hall, under the forecourt of St Pancras Station and Euston Road, are already underway. These works are due for completion in 2005.

Phase 2 of the works will see the construction of a new Northern ticket hall to the west of King's Cross station, with step-free access to the deep level lines.

Most of this work will take place underground, however there will be some changes above-ground, e.g. to provide entrances, emergency access and ventilation. London Underground have recently made applications, under the CTRL procedures, for new entrance features and ventilation shafts in front of King's Cross station.

Finally, there is the Government's Public Private Partnership (PPP). The PPP specification promises some upgrades in service capacity and reliability for King's Cross, by 2010, as shown below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line</th>
<th>2001</th>
<th>2010 with PPP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>No significant change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hammersmith &amp; City</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metropolitan</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Piccadilly</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victoria</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To the north of King's Cross Underground Station, there is a disused station on the Piccadilly Line at York Way. We understand that there are no plans or opportunities to re-open this station.
Figure 40 - London Underground Works & Hackney-Southwest

Legend

- **Red**: Boundary of King's Cross Central
- **Yellow**: Safeguarded Route for Previous Chelsea-Hackney Scheme
- **Blue**: London Underground Works Enabled by CTRL Act

November 2001
There are longstanding proposals for a new underground rail route between south-west and north-east London, initially termed the Chelsea-Hackney line. Hackney-SouthWest is a modified version of this previous outline proposal, for which a route, across the central area, is safeguarded under planning legislation.

TfL and the SRA are currently undertaking a study of route options for the new line which, like Thameslink 2000 (see 10.a. above), is intended to address the capacity shortage in the central area and bring significant public transport benefits to inner and outer London. In the central area, the safeguarded route between Victoria and Dalston is likely to be retained. The safeguarded area in the vicinity of King's Cross is shown in Figure 40. This indicates a broadly east-west alignment, following the Euston Road and Pentonville Road. The safeguarded area lies wholly outside the site for King's Cross Central and includes a location for a station.

At the northern end, the primary need is to improve rail access to Hackney. Beyond Hackney, a range of options is being examined, including serving Stratford, the Thames Gateway and/or the Lee Valley. In the south-west, the intention is to serve Clapham Junction, with a range of possible options beyond Clapham Junction including links with suburban rail services.

Hackney-SouthWest is forecast to increase total rail and Underground capacity, in the central area, by about 6%. 60% of passengers within the central area are expected to come from the Underground, particularly from the Victoria and Northern Lines. Hackney-SouthWest would relieve congestion on both lines, with additional potential benefits to the Wimbledon branch of the District line, and the Central line east of Stratford.

The Mayor’s Transport Strategy shows a provisional timescale for the Hackney-South-West scheme, with design and consultation work until 2010/2011 and construction starting thereafter. The provisional, projected opening date is 2015. The speed at which the scheme can be taken forward will depend on finance, resource and engineering constraints.
Figure 41 - Cross River Transit
Cross River Transit would improve links between a number of regeneration areas, along the South Bank and at King's Cross, employment, leisure and tourist facilities. It would also alleviate overcrowding on key sections of the Underground network, in particular the Northern and Victoria lines.

The Mayor supports Cross River Transit in principle. However, the scheme is not currently funded and it must compete for funds against other intermediate mode schemes and transport priorities. At present, TfL has identified funding for (at least) one intermediate mode scheme to be developed as a tramway. If Cross River Transit does go ahead, the scheme is likely to use either high quality modern trams, or articulated single deck trolley buses. Either way, vehicles would run at street level, segregated from other traffic, with priority given at traffic signals to minimise delays caused by congestion. Current estimates suggest that it might be used by 72 million passengers per year following an assumed opening year in 2007.
Figure 42 - Existing Road Network

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- A-Roads
- Other Selected Roads

November 2001

Parameters for Regeneration
10g Road Network

The existing road network within and around King's Cross Central is shown in Figure 42. Euston Road (the A501) runs to the south, with Midland Road and Pancras Road (A502) to the west and York Way (A5200) to the east. York Way meets the Euston Road at its junction with Pentonville Road and Gray's Inn Road, at the south-east corner of King's Cross Station.

Both Euston Road and Pentonville Road fall within the remit of TfL.

North of the Regent's Canal, the main existing road access into the site is via Wharf Road (off York Way). There is also another entrance off York Way further north, used by Castle Cement, Hanson Pioneer, Tarmac and other tenants of EWS (see Section 2.b.).

Construction work associated with London Underground's works at King's Cross/St Pancras (see 10.d above) has recently resulted in a reduction in the width of Euston Road. In order to ensure that bus journey times are not adversely affected, TfL has developed proposals for experimental bus lanes at various locations along the Euston Road (A501).

These bus lanes are now in place and operational. They have achieved a reduction in bus journey times. It is likely, therefore, that the bus lanes will remain in place after construction work has been completed and become a permanent feature of Euston Road.

Commentary

The Gasworks Tunnel on the East Coast Main Line, the deep level Piccadilly line tunnels alongside and the new Thameslink tunnels being constructed as part of CTRL will all be constraints on building foundations for future development. The new, bored Thameslink tunnels have been designed to take reasonable surface loadings that could permit buildings up to 6-7 storeys. Thameslink 2000 will impose more constraints where the new tunnels are 'cut and cover'.

The London Underground works between the two mainline stations will also impose limitations on surface loadings and there are a number of surface features, for example entrances, which must be retained and, where possible, enhanced, to create the very best possible "gateway" into King's Cross. Consequently, this part of the site is the most complex and challenging, and one of the most important.

Thameslink 2000, as a whole, may or may not go ahead, subject to the findings of a Public Inquiry and statutory approval from central Government. This uncertainty will not hold up King's Cross Central, however, because the basic station infrastructure and tunnel works into St Pancras are being completed in any event, as part of CTRL.

Cross River Transit and Hackney-SouthWest are at less advanced stages of planning. Both would come to King's Cross, but only Cross River Transit would link directly into the King's Cross Central development and improve transport links to and from the northern part of the site. We support the Cross River Transit proposals and will look to accommodate it, should the scheme receive funding and become a reality.

We are aware that TfL are seeking facilities for a transport depot at the northern end of the Cross River Transit scheme. We do not believe that it would be appropriate to accommodate the depot within King's Cross Central as this would not be consistent with optimising the development potential of such a highly accessible, central site. We are, however, willing to work closely with both the London Boroughs of Islington and Camden, and TfL, to identify a potential site elsewhere.

In the meantime (or if Cross River Transit does not go ahead), we will investigate other, local transport initiatives to improve connections between (for example) King's Cross Central, Camden Town and the Angel.
Figure 43 - Road Network Post-CTRL

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- A-Roads
- St Pancras Station Extension
- Other Selected Roads

November 2001
The CTRL works include a number of further changes to the local highway network. These works have started already and will be complete by 2007. The post-CTRL highway network is shown in Figure 43. The changes include:

» the realignment of Pancras Road;
» the realignment (straightening) of Goods Way;
» the realignment and widening of Midland Road, in part to provide for a taxi lane on the west side of the new St Pancras international station;
» new junctions between Pancras Road, Goods Way, Camley Street and Midland Road;
» a one-way anti-clockwise gyratory system around the new international station from Euston Road. Pancras Road will be for northbound traffic only and Midland Road for southbound traffic only;
» the realignment of a section of York Way, just to the south of the North London Railway Line. The existing viaduct will be removed and the road realigned to the west of its present position.

These works are taking place as part of the CTRL project, which will have an impact on traffic flows in the area.

Other schemes that would almost certainly lead to traffic flow changes are Congestion Charging; and P&O's proposed developments.

The Mayor's Congestion Charging Scheme may be in place sometime after 1st January 2003. It is likely to have some effect on local highway conditions, in particular along the Euston Road, Pancras Road, York Way, Caledonian Road, Gray's Inn Road and Pentonville Road. The proposed Congestion Charging Zone is shown in Figure 44. Euston Road lies outside the zone and will form its northern boundary. Roads to the south, e.g. Judd Street and Argyle Street, will be within the zone. Under the Mayor's plans, many road users would have to pay £5 per day to enter or drive within the zone, during the charging hours of 7am to 7pm, Monday to Friday.

There would be exemptions for groups such as disabled people and emergency services and a 90% discount for residents living within the zone.

TfL are currently undertaking highway modelling work to assess the detailed effects of the Congestion Charging Zone.

The P&O Developments are explained and discussed in Section 12.b. Under the P&O proposals, Railway Street and Caledonia Street would cease to be through routes for traffic and Wharfdale Road would be subject to traffic calming measures.
Figure 44 - Congestion Charging Zone

Legend

- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Congestion Charging Zone

November 2001
10h Providing for Pedestrians, Cyclists, Buses and Taxis

Pedestrians

Previous sections have outlined proposals for a series of transport interchanges at King's Cross/St Pancras. Pedestrian accessibility and permeability will be central to the integration of these interchanges, both with each other and with the urban areas immediately beyond, including King's Cross Central.

The Mayor's Transport Strategy stresses that walking is an important means of getting to and from public transport services and is involved in most other journeys. The Strategy states that London needs to be planned for the pedestrian and that the pedestrian environment is an important aspect of the quality of life for those who visit, live and work in London.

Cycling

The Mayor's Transport Strategy also promotes cycling. The London Cycle Network (LCN) already includes some 1,500 km of signed cycle routes. This forms half of the proposed network, which will link with Underground and main line rail stations.

There are, as yet, no designated routes serving the King's Cross Central site, but routes are planned as part of the LCN along Goods Way and a section of York Way.

This will improve cycle accessibility and provide the starting point for new routes as part of our proposed development.

The CTRL works include new, dedicated cycle lanes along the realigned Pancras Road and along Goods Way beneath the St Pancras station extension; and cycle priority measures at certain junctions, to facilitate cycle turning manoeuvres, e.g. across the Euston Road.

Buses

Existing bus services are illustrated in Figure 45. The boundaries of the site are well served by bus routes providing direct links to surrounding areas. Principal routes include the east-west axis along Euston Road and Pentonville Road, together with north-south services along Pancras Road, York Way and Caledonian Road. As with the Underground network, the north of the site is less well served, with no services along Goods Way (or Wharf Road) at present.

Currently some 900,000 bus passengers per annum board or alight at stops near King's Cross/St Pancras (TfL figures). Current scheduled service frequencies are set out in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road / Highway</th>
<th>Routes</th>
<th>Scheduled Peak Hour Frequency (buses per hour in each direction)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euston Road</td>
<td>10, 30, 73, 91</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancras Road</td>
<td>46, 214</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>York Way</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray's Inn Road</td>
<td>17, 45, 46</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>King's Cross Road</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentonville Road</td>
<td>30, 73, 214</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caledonian Road</td>
<td>17, 91, 259</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other Transport Infrastructure
Figure 45 - Existing Bus Services

November 2001
Improvements to the bus network are planned as complementary measures to the proposed Congestion Charging Scheme.

TfL aim to implement a range of measures including bus priority, illegal parking enforcement, improved waiting facilities and better passenger information, as part of the London Bus Initiative (LBI) programme.

Phase 1 of the LBI is underway. It aims to progressively deliver improvements on 27 strategically important ‘BusPlus’ routes by April 2002. Phase 2 will cover a further 43 routes including routes 17, 30 and 63, which serve King’s Cross. Work associated with Phase 2 is also underway. Phase 2 is scheduled for completion in 2003.

Taxis

Taxis are another important element of the transport provision at King’s Cross and St Pancras stations.

Moreover, demand for taxis is certain to increase when international Eurostar services begin operating out of St Pancras in 2007.

Existing taxi ranks are situated at the south-western corner of King’s Cross Station (accessed from Pancras Road); on the west side of St Pancras on the station access road adjacent to the existing ticket office; and (just recently) along the service road adjacent to platform 1 of King’s Cross Station, with access from York Way.

As part of the CTRL and station enlargement works, LCR propose to provide separate taxi drop off points for domestic and international passengers, both on the east side of St Pancras station. A single taxi pick-up point will operate on the west side of the station, on Midland Road. Taxis will therefore follow an anti-clockwise one way system around the station, within a dedicated taxi lane.

TfL have now assumed control of the Public Carriage Office with responsibility for the quality and fare regulation of taxis. TfL will also act as the co-ordinating body to integrate and improve taxi services generally.

Commentary

We need to make the most of the opportunities and advantages afforded by new, co-ordinated interchange facilities at King’s Cross-St Pancras. Promoting accessibility and local permeability is fundamental to our objective for a ‘human city’ and we have explained that this means:

» "providing access to an integrated transport system which provides genuine choice;"

» "putting people before traffic; and"

» "the right structure and sequence of spaces. Places should connect with each other, both physically and visually and be easy to navigate. At King’s Cross, one of the challenges is to make an effective link between the place of arrival, the stations, and the land to the north of the canal. East-west links will also be important" (Principles for a Human City)

In addition, we will give a high priority to cycle, bus and taxi accessibility and provide new facilities to support and encourage these transport modes, where possible and appropriate. We are keen to see an integrated network of high quality cycle routes and will work with local bus operators to plan and deliver the right services for the future, including better links between King’s Cross Central and Camden Town.

In the meantime, any plans for the upgrade of King’s Cross station (see Section 12) are bound to have an impact on existing bus and taxi operations. We are keen to see an overall solution that meets the various design, regeneration, heritage, rail capacity and other transport planning objectives. This means accommodating buses and taxis in a logical, coherent manner, as part of an integrated approach to public transport at the two main line stations and the area in between.
10i Car Parking

The Government's planning policy guidance on transport, PPG13, states that the availability of car parking has a major influence on the means of transport people choose for their journeys. Accordingly, the PPG defines national maximum parking standards for each type of development use, to be applied across England.

In this case, the national maximum standards are of limited relevance, given the Central Area location and high transport accessibility. Camden Council has its own standards for car parking and these are set out in the adopted UDP, Chapter 16. The standards for Central Area locations are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Parking Standard</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>A1</strong> Shops</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 1,000-1,500 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A2</strong> Financial and Professional Services</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 1,000-1,500 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>A3</strong> Food and Drink</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 1,000-1,500 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B1</strong> Business</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 1,000-1,500 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2 / B8</strong> Industrial, Storage &amp; Distribution</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 1,000-1,500 m² GFA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C1</strong> Hotels</td>
<td>Max of 1 space per 20 bedrooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C3</strong> Residential</td>
<td>Between 0.5 and 1 space per unit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The adopted Camden UDP also states that the Council will seek to establish car free residential areas.

Within the new deposit draft Chapter 13, draft Policy KC7 states that:

"The Council will grant planning permission for development proposals for the King's Cross Opportunity Area where proposed car usage and car parking provision is at minimum levels necessary and where the provision of carfree housing is maximised."

The explanatory text explains that the Council expects to see car parking provision at very low levels, with the developers expected to demonstrate how traffic generation will be minimised (paras 13.50 and 13.51).
Commentary

The King's Cross Central development will accord with the development parking standards set down in the adopted UDP. If we can, we will reduce car parking still further. We must, however, bear in mind the needs of commercial occupiers, residents and other users.

As far as residential development is concerned, car parking ratios are likely to vary across the site with location, housing type and tenure. In some areas, the car parking ratio may well be below 0.5 spaces per unit. Elsewhere, the ratio may be higher.

We agree that a proportion of car free housing will be appropriate, but it is not a panacea. There are implications for social exclusion and many people would not live in London without a car, not least for child-care reasons. We should also be conscious that taking vehicular traffic out of neighbourhoods and streets could have undesirable consequences, for the kind of place we want King's Cross Central to be. For example, car free streets can become somewhat sterile and create insecurity late at night.

We should regard the proper application of car free housing initiatives as one measure among many to reduce car travel demand, promote sustainable transport choices and manage traffic effectively.

It should be noted that there is a built-in incentive for the developers to keep car parking ratios as low as possible. As noted in PPG13, car parking can take up a large amount of space in new development, can be costly to business and reduce densities. At Brindleyplace in Birmingham we have not built all of the car parking we have permission for. Much of the parking that is provided is within a multi-storey building. This means that, should a lower level of car parking become sustainable, we could redevelop the site for alternative uses, for example offices or homes. The Brindleyplace car park also contains other active ground floor uses, including a gym and bar, convenience store, estate office and cash-point machine.

We are exploring the potential to follow the same approach at King's Cross, as part of our car parking strategy. Should the many transport improvements that are promised over the next 10-15 years come to fruition, and create the 'step change' in transport accessibility that we would all like to see, then we would like to have the future option to remove car parking spaces and increase the level of built development.

Multi-storey parking is also one way that we can achieve the shared use of parking, between uses. PPG13 encourages the shared use of parking, particularly in central areas and as part of major proposals.
Figure 46 - Topography

Legend
- Boundary of King's Cross Central
- 15 - 20m OD
- 20 - 25m OD
- 25 - 30m OD
- >30m OD

November 2001
11 Site Infrastructure, Services and Utilities

11a Topography and Geology

The topography of the site is fairly flat (see Figure 46), rising gently at a gradient of about 1 in 100 in a northerly direction from a level of +17mOD\(^{16}\) at King's Cross/St. Pancras. Within this overall profile, there are minor, local level changes of up to 5 metres, a legacy, principally, of canal and railway developments in the 19th century.

The geology of the site is Made Ground overlying a typical London succession of London Clay, Lambeth Series, Thanet Sand and Chalk. The Made Ground is variable in content and thickness, but is never more than about 4m thick. This reflects the site’s history of brick-workings, canal, railway and industrial development, over some 150 years.

There is some contamination of the Made Ground, see Section 9.e.

The Regent’s Canal crosses the centre of the site from west to east at a level of +21 metres AOD.

Commentary

The topography and geology of the site will not have a strong bearing on development proposals, other than in the immediate vicinity of the canal, where the change in level, on the north side, between the towpath and Wharf Road (+5 metres) will be a significant factor. Here, making the most of the canal will demand skill and imagination.

There has been much discussion, in the past, about re-opening one or more of the former basins, as reported in Section 9.a. Several Camden Council and English Heritage documents refer to this potential. The further step of re-connecting the former Granary basin, to the Canal, would involve moving a 400 kV power cable; see Section 11.c. below.

\(^{16}\) Ordnance Datum
Figure 47 - Existing Drainage

Legend
- **Red**: Boundary of King's Cross Central
- **Blue**: Strategic Sewers (other sewers not shown)
- **Dark Blue**: Fleet Storm Relief
- **Light Blue**: Main Overland Drainage Flow Directions

November 2001

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11b Drainage

King’s Cross Central is a large site and it generates substantial volumes of runoff from heavy rainfall. We have not surveyed the existing drainage regime in any detail, but it is evident that much of the runoff simply soaks away into the Made Ground below. Parts of the site, in particular the north west corner, are completely waterlogged following heavy rain.

North of the canal, the main overland flow is to the north-east, i.e. towards the Islington triangle (see Figure 47). Where there is drainage, this area discharges principally into the Camden Sewer. South of the canal, the main overland flow is to the south-west, i.e. towards St Pancras Station and the Midland Main Line. This area discharges principally into the Fleet Sewer.

Both the Camden Sewer and Fleet Sewer are combined sewers, i.e. sewers carrying both storm and foul flows. The Camden Sewer feeds into the Fleet Sewer just downstream of the site.

A third sewer, the Mid Level Sewer, crosses the northern part of the site. However, there are no inlets or connections from the site and it therefore plays no part in its local drainage.

Perhaps surprisingly, there does not appear to be any drainage discharge into the Regent’s Canal. The northern half of the site has no outfalls to the canal and, to the south, the main overland flow is away from the canal, as described above.

Commentary

We will need to address drainage capacity, as part of the redevelopment. The main sewers may not have adequate capacity to absorb the future storm and/or foul flows from new houses, workplaces and other land uses and so new capacity may have to be created.

We will also need to address the attenuation of peak storm water flows. Currently, the ponding of water within the Made Ground and clay attenuates peak flows into the sewers from heavy rain.

We will need to replicate this ad hoc attenuation effect within any new, piped drainage system, to avoid overloading the sewers.

There are many ways of attenuating flows. One method is to construct balancing ponds or utilise other waterbodies. Another is to construct below-ground pipes or tanks, to hold water prior to discharge. We are examining several methods and techniques, including those advocated by the Environment Agency as components of sustainable urban drainage systems (SUDS).
Figure 48 - Other Utilities

Legend
- Red: Boundary of King's Cross Central
- Yellow: Strategic Power Supply
- Blue: Power Supply
- Cyan: Strategic Water Supply (London Water Ring Main)
- Grey: Water Supply
- Green: Gas Pipes

Position of Re-located Gas Governor

November 2001
11c Other Utilities

Figure 48 shows the arrangement of water, power and gas utilities in and around the site, post-CTRL. The utilities include:

» Strategic power supply cables (400 kV) buried in the towpath on the north side of the canal;

» Strategic water supply, comprising the London Ring Main;

» Other power and water services; and

» Gas pipes.

Commentary

The London Ring Main is very deep and is unlikely to be a factor in any development proposals. The strategic power supply network is of greater significance, however. Its presence makes it unlikely that a re-opened Granary basin, for example, could be re-connected to the Canal. Re-establishing the connection to the Canal would involve diverting a 400 kV Supergrid electricity cable, buried in the canal towpath on the north side. The cable is a vital component of North London’s power supply network. Any diversion would be an extremely difficult and expensive undertaking.

Future utility demands must also be considered. The King’s Cross Central site is not highly serviced. A high-density mixed use development will have very substantial utility demands, requiring major enhancement of supplies to the site. New distribution networks will be needed for all utilities and our spatial masterplan will need to reflect any spatial implications that this might have. For example:

» The supply of electric power to the site will need to be enhanced dramatically. The high-voltage supply system will need substantial upgrading;

» The water supply will also need to be upgraded. We are currently investigating several options for water supply, including the abstraction of chalk groundwater and/or the recycling of ‘grey water’ for non-potable uses;

Businesses and homes will also require access to the very best telecommunications and IT infrastructure, with spare capacity for internal link-ups and future expansion. As explained in Principles for a Human City, we are keen to explore the optimum provision of district services, such as heat, power, water, waste collection and recycling, telecommunications and IT. This could have occupier as well as environmental benefits.
Figure 49 - King's Cross Station

Legend
- King's Cross Station
- Passenger Facilities / Retail
- Ticket Office
- Cycle Parking
- Main Pedestrian Route
12 Adjacent Development Projects

12a Railtrack/King's Cross

As explained in Sections 8.a and 10.b, the SRA and Railtrack have objectives to upgrade King's Cross Station (see Figure 49), to enhance its capacity and allow more services to be run. At the same time, Railtrack aims to relocate the ticket hall and other functions from the 'temporary' structure fronting the Euston Road. The only available space is to the west and south of the existing station.

Much of this land is controlled by LCR and would otherwise pass to Argent St George to develop as part of King's Cross Central. The SRA, Railtrack, DTLR, LCR and Argent St George are now working together to formulate co-ordinated plans for King's Cross Station, the land to the south and west and station-related infrastructure such as the surface vent shafts for the Gasworks Tunnel (see Section 10.b).

Commentary

The land requirements for the upgrading of King's Cross Station must be established before we can finalise a spatial masterplan for King's Cross Central. We support the upgrading of King's Cross Station and it could play a major role in the regeneration of the area. It is important, therefore, to get it right. Any redevelopment scheme should be funded; deliverable and based firmly on defined operational needs.

We are also keen to see an overall solution that meets all the various design, regeneration, heritage, rail capacity and other transport planning objectives.

For example, any scheme should reflect a thorough appreciation of wider regeneration issues, such as the need to make the most of the railway lands behind and the opportunity to improve connections south of Euston Road.

LCR and Argent St George are pleased to be working with the SRA and others to find the best solution. We will also be working with TfL, London Underground and others to determine the best transport arrangements for buses, taxis and other transport modes. See Section 10.h. above.
Figure 50 - P&O Blocks

Legend
- Boundary of King’s Cross Central
- Block A
- Block B
- Block C
- Block D

November 2001
12b P&O Blocks

The P&O Blocks are four blocks of predominantly Victorian properties, on the east side of York Way, opposite King’s Cross Station (see Figure 50). The site extends from Grays Inn Road in the south to Wharfdale Road in the north, with Caledonian Road/Balfie Street forming the eastern boundary. The blocks are bisected by Pentonville Road, Caledonia Street and Railway Street.

Block A, known as the ‘Lighthouse Block’ lies within Camden. Blocks B, C and D lie within Islington.

P&O have made planning applications for development, to Camden Council and Islington Council respectively. Islington Planning Committee deferred the planning application for Blocks B and C in February 2001. Since then, P&O have put forward a number of scheme amendments.

The amended scheme includes:

» Shops
» A supermarket
» Restaurants and bars
» Offices
» Hotel accommodation
» Gallery
» Health Club and other leisure facilities and
» Residential living accommodation

P&O hope to gain planning permission and conclude the legal agreements necessary to deliver the scheme, shortly. P&O has stated that its scheme might take approximately three years to complete, with the work on Block C scheduled to commence first, in the spring of 2002, followed by work on Blocks A and B. The development of Block D is earmarked to commence in early 2003. Block D may be completed in the middle of 2004.

The proposals include some amendments to the existing highway arrangements. P&O propose that Railway Street and Caledonia Street cease to be through routes for traffic and that Wharfdale Road should be subject to various traffic calming measures.

Commentary

We will need to take account of P&O’s plans, should they receive the planning and other permissions they need to redevelop Blocks A to D. For example, the P&O scheme would alter the traffic/highway arrangement in the area and the pattern of pedestrian routes, with possible implications for the future treatment and management of York Way.
13 Viability

13a Potential Risk and Reward

If we are to go ahead with development of King's Cross Central, the proposals must be 'commercially viable'. This means that, assuming a realistic set of assumptions, the project must be:

» materially more likely to make a profit than a loss; and

» likely to offer our shareholders and other potential investors an appropriate rate of return - one that reflects the risks involved.

All businesses face two principal sorts of risk: those that they can control closely by good management and those that are beyond their control, for example changes in general market conditions and prices of key commodities. Property development is often seen as a high value and profitable sector but, in reality, those involved have to cope with both a hugely complex construction process and highly volatile markets.

Even for a single building, the construction process depends on many thousands of components being erected and assembled together on site, without major mistakes and regardless of the weather. Failure in any one area - be it steel fabrication, brick laying or lift installation - will cause delays to others, disrupt the programme and increase costs. These problems are perhaps particularly acute for 'one off', sophisticated commercial or mixed use buildings. As such, only the most organised and motivated teams can complete projects on time and in budget. Major cost overruns are common and their size and frequency tends to increase with the complexity of the building.

The property cycle is always more accentuated/volatile than the economy as a whole, because large decisions about new accommodation are nearly always easy to defer. This applies particularly to commercial office buildings. In the middle of an economic cycle, demand from occupiers picks up and developers tend to respond by expanding their building programme. Because of the time required to produce new buildings, there is a lag before the new 'product' comes onto the market, leading to a shortage in supply as the economy continues to grow. This shortage leads to a rapid increase in sale prices, rents and capital values, encouraging developers to build even more. There comes a point, however, when strong demand drops off, such that there is too much new accommodation coming onto the market, leading to falling rents, sales prices and capital values. Typically, developers can continue to sell residential accommodation, but at a slower rate and at a lower price. New commercial buildings built speculatively, however, can simply remain empty for years, creating long 'void' periods.

These risks have contributed to many business failures within the property sector. No other sectors of the Stock Exchange had so many casualties between 1991 and 1993, when the market collapsed. Analysis shows that, compared with other sectors on the London Stock Exchange (e.g. banks, telecoms etc), property comes fifth from bottom in terms of total returns to investors over the last 10 years.
The net effect is that developers and their financiers are now more circumspect about the risks that they are taking. These risks include many of the parameters outlined in this document:

» planning risks (e.g. conditions and other restrictions, section 106 requirements)
» engineering risks (e.g. ground conditions and utilities)
» construction risks (e.g. changes in construction prices)
» letting risks for commercial buildings (e.g. demand from occupiers, incentives required and rental levels)
» sales risk for residential development (e.g. demand from purchasers and the price they are willing to pay)
» finance risks (e.g. availability of equity and debt and interests rates)
» competition risks (e.g. other competing sites)
» political risks (e.g. changes in the tax regime and Government policy)

For all of these reasons, institutional investors tend to have a limited exposure to property and only some are involved directly in funding speculative development. The risks involved are such that property development is generally considered akin to venture capital funding.

Commentary

Our shareholders and other potential investors will be mindful of the risks involved in long-term speculative development. They will be looking for potential financial returns (profits) that reflect and justify these risks, bearing in mind the likely performance of low-risk investments such as the bank, gilts and bonds; and medium-risk investments such as equities (shares).

Like shares, the performance of property development projects is not guaranteed. Potential profit is also the project risk margin, to cater for the range of uncertainties identified above. It is in the very nature of the property and development sector that many projects that appear viable ‘on paper’, at the outset, end up generating very little profit, or indeed make a loss. Of course, other developments do very well, and generate higher profits than was first anticipated.
13b Deliverability

If we are to achieve our objectives for King's Cross Central, to a reasonable timescale after 2006, our proposals must be deliverable in a range of market conditions. Assuming a start date of 2006 and looking at the experience of other major schemes, it is unlikely that we will reach the final stages of development before 2015. This means that we must develop a spatial masterplan that provides options to phase development in different ways and/or adjust the balance of land uses over time, according to market demand and other factors.

We have learnt these lessons from past experience, notably Brindleyplace in Birmingham.

Here, we revised the spatial masterplan we inherited in 1992, to enable a more incremental approach to development and delivery; and to provide greater flexibility over the timing, sequence, and land use content of individual building projects, consistent with market demand.

The result is that we have continued to deliver living accommodation, workplace accommodation, retail and leisure uses, without a break, for more than eight years, in the centre of Birmingham. It also means that we have been able, increasingly, to innovate in the provision of mixed-use buildings, in ways that could not have been anticipated when development first began.

Commentary

In our view, King's Cross Central is the most deliverable major development scheme identified within Central London. Subject to securing a satisfactory planning permission, the legal agreement with the landowners provides for the phased release and development of some 58.5 acres, starting in 2006. No other major development proposal that we are aware of, in Central London, has the same level of certainty about its deliverability.

In terms of planning, it is important to recognise that, at this stage, some flexibility is a 'good thing'. Any planning permission should incorporate a range of development levels for each land use type, within the parameters of a vibrant mixed use scheme. It should also recognise the need to spread infrastructure and other costs across the development period; 'front loading' such costs could very well prejudice the economic delivery and financial viability of the scheme.

A flexible planning approach will be essential, therefore, to the successful delivery of the King's Cross Central development and the associated regeneration. Camden Council's Key Issues Consultation document recognised that:

"...it is important that the Council is not overly prescriptive in its preferences...or too ambitious in seeking to shape development several years and at least one economic cycle hence."

The deposit draft Chapter 13 states that:

"Because of the long-term nature of the Opportunity Area, a flexible planning approach that reflects changing social and economic circumstances will be central to the successful completion of site development..." (para 13.10)

"Because of the long-term nature of the site's development, combined with a changing economic and social environment, it will be important to keep abreast of trends in these areas to provide the basis for ongoing decisions about the appropriate mix of uses in the development of the Opportunity Area. Flexibility in design can accommodate changing needs and improve the viability and sustainability of the development in the long-term." (para 13.32)

We welcome and support this approach.
The principal documentary sources used to prepare this document are:

» Principles for a Human City, Argent St George, LCR and Exel, July 2001

» CTRL Environmental Statement documents

» CTRL construction drawings

» PPG3 on Housing

» PPG13 on Transport

» PPG24 on Noise


» Towards the London Plan, Greater London Authority, May 2001

» Camden Unitary Development Plan (UDP), adopted March 2001

» Planning for the Future of King's Cross, Review of Chapter 13 of Camden's Unitary Development Plan, Key Issues Consultation July/August 2001

» King's Cross Opportunity Area, Deposit Draft of Chapter 13 of the London Borough of Camden's Unitary Development Plan, November 2001

» Camden Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), Planning Brief no. 15, Community Planning Brief for the King's Cross Railway Lands, 1994

» Islington's Unitary Development Plan, First Review, Revised Plan, Second Deposit Version, June 2000

» Supplementary Advice on Sustainable Residential Quality on Large Sites, London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC), November 1999

» London's Housing Capacity, report by the GLA, September 2000

» Advice on Strategic Planning Guidance for London, London Planning Advisory Committee (LPAC), 1994

» LPACs Endowment to the Mayor, LPAC, March 2000

» Strategic Planning Advice on High Buildings and Strategic Views in London, The Robin Clement Memorial Advice, LPAC, March 1999

» English Heritage Position Statement, King's Cross Railway Lands, March 1997

» English Heritage report, King's Cross Development Site, An Inventory of Architectural and Industrial Features, 1998

» Regent's Canal Conservation Area Statement, London Borough of Camden, 2001

» King's Cross Conservation Area Statement, London Borough of Camden, 1998

» RPG3A, Supplementary Guidance for London on the Protection of Strategic Views

» Various survey reports commissioned by Argent St George

» The Mayor's Transport Strategy, Greater London Authority, July 2001

» Camden draft Regeneration Strategy, June 2001

» Camden's Community Strategy "Our Camden, Our Future"

» Islington Council's Regeneration Strategy

» Camden Council web site (www.camden.gov.uk)

» Railtrack web site (www.railtrack.co.uk)

» London Underground web site (www.thetube.com)

» P&O web site (www.regentquarter.co.uk)
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